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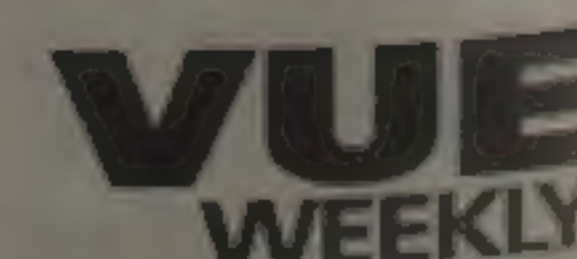
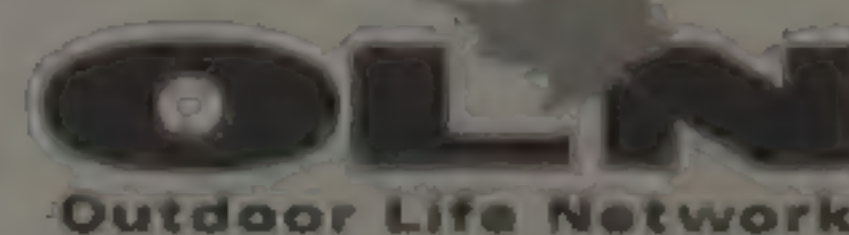
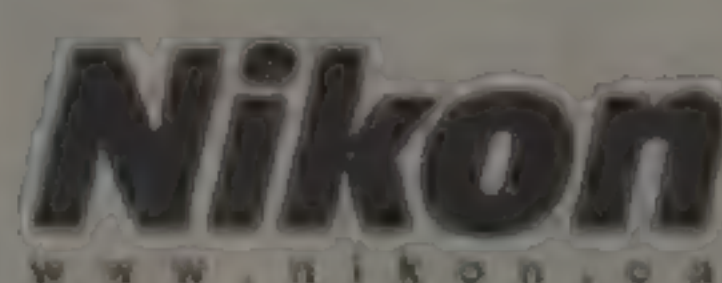
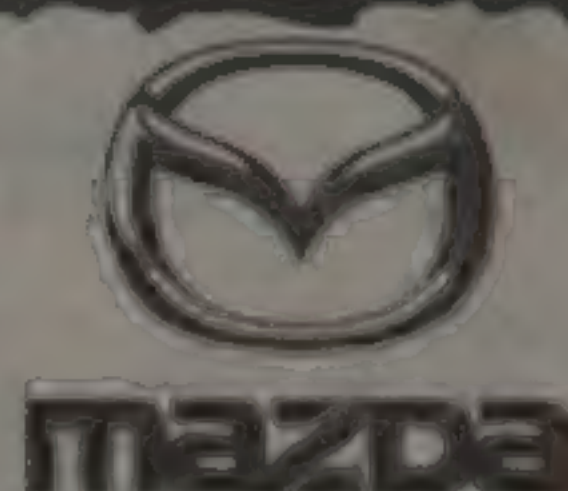
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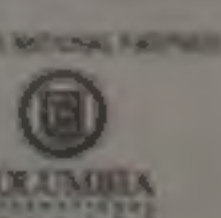
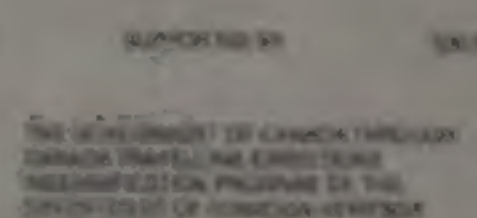
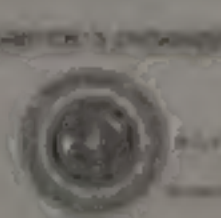
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M-More



Luis Jacob's edifice complex

Collapsing New Buildings critiques
the architecture of
capitalism

BY ALLAN ANTLIFF

Collapsing New Buildings is a tripartite exhibition by Luis Jacob which includes five sculptures (or "BILTS"), an *Album* composed of images culled from magazines, and *Model City*, a series of out-of-focus photos depicting a three-dimensional model of Toronto. The exhibition analyzes the constructed environment by reordering that environment's structures in a way that plays with our notions of everything from beauty to memory to sexuality.

Jacob's BILTS, for instance, take the phallic skyscrapers of downtown Toronto's financial district and extend each building's shape horizontally. Domineering towers that once thwarted our attempts to perceive them as a whole now become easy-to-digest versions of themselves, true to form but no longer the formidable icons of power they once were. Meanwhile, *Model City's* photos of the ever-expanding model of the Toronto megalopolis in Toronto's City Hall—a series of buildings with no floors, windows or doors—expose the model as the embodiment of the Canadian capitalist imagination, an idealized, efficient, regulated city... completely absent of people.

I spoke with Luis Jacob about his exhibition and the philosophy behind it. Here's our conversation.

Vue Weekly: Can you tell me about the politics of your exhibit?

Luis Jacob: What I present and how I present it is decided in terms of what I think the work can contribute to a discourse that already exists. In Alberta there is a similar situation to Ontario, which is where I live. In both cases, the conservative provincial governments are enacting an authoritarian restructuring of social reality for the sake of an exacerbated capitalism, and in both cases people are trying to figure out ways to oppose this restructuring. My show here in Edmonton deals with different forms of authority, the possibility of their collapse and the potential for a new equality, a new horizontality of relations. The images in the show, in particular in the work entitled *Album*, depict various instances of authority—parental authority, political authority, cultural authority—and various scenes of reversal, defiance, subversion and opposition to it. I expect that visi-

tors to the exhibition here will recognize that the issues raised are not abstract, but in fact correspond to things they already deal with in their lives.

VW: The exhibition has a lot of humour in it, and humour has a long political association with subversion, particularly in anarchist art practices. I'm thinking specifically of the BILTS, which invert the upright power "thrust" of bank skyscrapers by replicating their structural configurations at the base and then extending them horizontally. Can you elaborate on how you use humour?

LJ: With the BILTS I wanted to work with something that I and so many people in Toronto see every day: the monumental office-buildings of the financial district. There's certainly something perverse in making sculptures about these

an origin of their seduction. The city being depicted is perfect, in a way, is without the messy conflicts of social reality. But it can be so only because there are no people in the city. The buildings have no windows, no doors; there are no people on the street. There are only perfect white blocks.... Another level of abstraction arises in these photographs when we consider the way in which architectural, engineering and bureaucratic decisions are made. These kinds of decisions are made by people divorced from the realities they are analyzing, in locations remote from those being affected, on the basis of statistics and descriptive methods that are reductive and simplifying of the realities they purport to describe. It is this level of abstraction that is being parodied in these lovely out-of-focus photographs.

VW: Is there any suggestion of an alternative to capitalism in your work?

LJ: My work presents the perversions of capitalism and the other authoritarian factors that determine our experience, beginning with my own experience. These factors include heterosexism, patriarchy, the absurd specialization in our society that divides artists and non-artists. However, there are a few metaphorical "utopian moments" in the exhibition. An example of this is the image in *Album* of the two astronauts in space floating beside one another. What is upward for one becomes downward for the other. What is true for one individual is not invalidated by the fact that the opposite is true for another individual. I see this as utopian in relation to our situation right here, where the truth of one individual

one group is made so because they can enforce this truth through legislation and the consciousness industry—and if these fail, by the police and military. I agree that capitalism is an economic system, and that it is also a social system—a system of ordering relations between people, of regimenting the production of the imagination, of controlling the flow of meaning between subjects who possess shared creative faculties. By addressing my work to the imagination, and by stimulating the meaning-producing faculties in the people who consent to become my audience, I hope that this work becomes a catalyst for the articulation of what we sense is sick and wrong, and the proposition of what we feel are workable alternatives. Because capitalism is inhuman and damages everyone in it. We need to imagine alternatives. ■



buildings by extruding an element from these buildings, and then laying them horizontally on the gallery floor. The result is a series of elegant minimalist sculptures that appear as if squeezed out of a toothpaste tube or some very peculiar bowel movement. I am interested in a type of humour where one grasps a new combination of meanings that causes one to begin convulsing with laughter. I contrast this with another type of humour where a joke serves to confirm one's prejudices and what one already believes to know.

VW: And *Model City*? I detect an element of parody at work here, a parody that plays off the representation of the city and its function as an idealization of the growth process, which is determined not by planning for human needs, but by planning for needs determined by capitalism and its infrastructures.

LJ: Yes, *Model City* is about abstraction. There is something dreamy about the photos that is also

Collapsing New Buildings
By Luis Jacob • Latitude 53 Gallery
To Feb 23

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COVER STORY: They say this of a lot of bands, but when the New Deal claims you really have to see them live to "get" them, they're not joking. Their exciting, no-machines brand of live house music has made them one of Canada's hottest acts—even in the dead of winter • 29

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yourVUE

Whole lotto love

I just had to acknowledge Paul Matwychuk's Theatre Notes column that discussed the current Fringe controversy regarding the absence of "the Bloc" from the Fringe 2002 lineup ["Fringe unhinged?", January 24-30]. I felt that your presentation of the issues was fair yet effectively countered the tone of Liz Nicholls's article that appeared in the *Edmonton Journal*. It is interesting that what essentially was a non-story has become such a heated topic in theatre circles... and I, like most, have my own spin on the story.

I am an Edmonton theatre artist who has been involved in a number of different production companies/projects over the last eight years. During this time, I have always been unsuccessful at getting a coveted spot at the Edmonton Fringe (either because my group was too far down on the waiting list, unable/unwilling to do the weekend "winter camp-out thing" or because we were not lucky enough to be drawn in the lottery). In fact, when Paul Matwychuk attended the Fringe Lottery at the Arts Barns, Fall 2000, I was one of the artists he featured (Try Red Productions, *A View From the Top*) in an article that highlighted some of the production companies that "didn't make it." At the

time, he asked me how I felt about the lottery system and I told him that although I was disappointed, I felt it was fair.

This year the current project I'm involved with, Cheese Tea Productions, did get drawn in the lottery... finally! Although this will be an Edmonton Fringe debut for Cheese Tea, all of the artists involved in this project have been actively involved in theatre for years! Theatre hacks we are not—and it is for that reason that I very much resented the message that I felt was jumping from between the lines of the Liz Nicholls article.

I have discussed the Fringe Lottery format, the Nicholls article and your comments in Theatre Notes with many people (some who are indeed stakeholders to this issue and many who are not) over the past week. Overwhelmingly, the consensus and feedback I have received is this: the moment that the Fringe institutes a system that fast-tracks Fringe "favourites" (or those groups who are perceived as sure financial successes), it will also create a pecking order which violates the purpose and philosophy under which the festival was originally established.

With all due respect to Stewart Lemoine, David Belke, Wes Borg, et al.—I love their material and support their work without question—the current lottery system is fair and guarantees an ever-changing dynamic that sets every Fringe Festival apart

from the last, and this opinion is coming from someone who has experienced little success from the lottery system... until now. Yay! —STEPHANIE ADAMS (VIA E-MAIL)

Correction

A typo in a photo caption in last week's issue of *Vue Weekly* mistakenly identified Bob Baker as "Bob Baxter." Bob Baker is, of course, the artistic director of the Citadel Theatre and director of their new production of Noel Coward's *Present Laughter*. Bob Baxter, meanwhile (as a quick Internet search reveals), is an environmental activist seeking to remove the Robert Moses Parkway from the U.S. side of Niagara Falls, a faculty member at the University of Durham in England and the creator of "Bob Baxter's Bomber Command," a website devoted to the memory of WWII U.S. Air Force veterans. *Vue Weekly* regrets the error, but at least we placed Baker in good company.

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, both positive and negative. Send your opinion by mail (*Vue Weekly*, 10303-108 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 1L7), by fax ((780) 426-2889) or by e-mail (letters@vue.ab.ca). Preference is given to feedback about articles in *Vue Weekly*; we reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Please include a daytime telephone number.

What's on Track

FEBRUARY

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and
TUE
5

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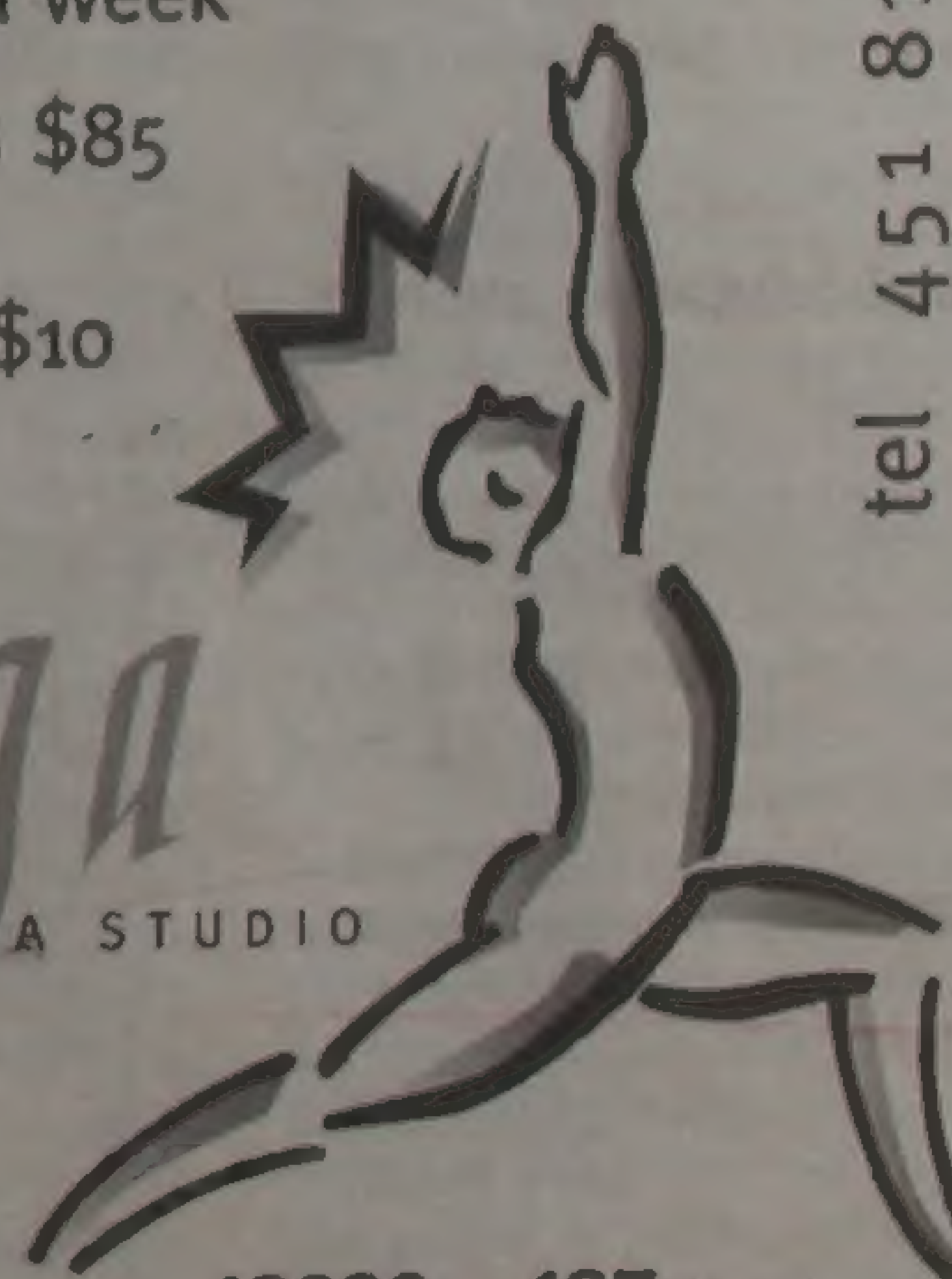
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BY RICHARD BURNETT

She's got legs!

I first met drag queen extraordinaire Enza "Supermodel" Anderson when we both guested on PrideVision's SoGayTV show last summer. And boys, let me tell ya: Enza looked like she just walked off the set of a ZZ Top video.

As ZZ Top says, "I'm a fool for your stockings, I believe." But we all know pantyhose eventually get the runs. Five weeks into Enza's headline-grabbing political campaign to replace Stockwell Day as leader of the Canadian Alliance party, her ab-fab campaign is showing signs of fraying at the edges. At press time, Enza was still \$15,000 short of the required \$25,000 deposit and 100 signatures short of the 300 Alliance members necessary to nominate a candidate by the January 31 nomination deadline.

"People come up to me and say, 'Good luck—I'd vote for you.' So I tell them to become an Alliance member, but they don't want to sign up. It's only 10 bucks. They just don't want to get involved," a clearly frustrated Enza told me one night after a Toronto fundraising appearance. "You know, I've been there for every

[gay] community group in Toronto. They call me and say, 'Hey Enza, will you help us out?' And I'm there for them. Now I ask them to sign up and they tell me no. I just want to cry. How can people say this is a great idea and not support me?"

The widespread political apathy in Canada's gay communities coast to coast is exacerbated by the virulent anti-gay sentiment within the Alliance, notably from Dr. Grant Hill, who is also running in the Alliance leadership race. But Canadians will never get the opportunity to remedy the bigotry of the Alliance from within if they don't support candidates like Enza.

"Apathy is our biggest problem—and to make matters worse, nobody gives a shit," quips Charlie MacKenzie, past national campaign director and leader of the now-defunct Partie Rhinoceros. "That was the problem the Rhinos had. When we were arbitrarily deleted from the Canadian political process in 1994, I finally got through to Clayton Ruby, the great civil rights lawyer in Canada, to defend the Rhinos. He said he'd be glad to take our case for a quarter-million dollars. That's the way it is today. Everything has a price tag, especially democracy."

"I'm not surprised at the way Enza is being treated," MacKenzie adds. "It's regrettable because she is making one of the most dynamic, meaningful political statements this country has seen in many, many years."

Many mainstream media pundits have also dismissed Enza as mere satire, but Enza—who placed third with 13,518 votes in Toronto's last mayoralty race—asks "Why is it

comes from a Catholic background but doesn't practise. 'It's about recognition and participation—there are thousands of eyes viewing your contribution. This is a way to clean your plate while cleaning your soul.'

What "sinners" confess to online ranges as widely as their experience—from innocuous declarations of peeing in the shower or sporting lusher eyebrows than Elvis Presley to increasingly salacious ones, such as coveting thy sister's wife or one man's pithy statement, "I once traded my wedding ring to a woman for sexual favours and told my wife I lost my ring." Some are troubling: "Why did Jesus have to redefine adultery? Every time I'm 'alone,' it isn't my wife that I visualize making love too, but my gorgeous nudist stepdaughter," writes one frustrated confessor. "If she ever makes a move or even opens the door, I don't know how I could resist."

Unlike traditional confessions made to one person across a porous grille, in the cyber realm, feckless misdeeds, obsessions and weaknesses receive much wider airplay. While the upshot is the same—confession eases the mind—airing it all online guarantees an enormous audience. As Brazier has discovered, it's also one that is voraciously voyeuristic, eager to take a surreptitious peek at Sin, if not cough up to it. Notproud.com, he says, gets nearly 10,000 hits a day.

The volume of surfers on Daily-confession.com is even greater. According to its founder Greg Fox, the site receives three million hits a month, with an average of 150 to 250 confessions flowing in each day. "The

when a drag queen runs for office it's a big joke, but when a politician shows up at press conference on a Seadoo dressed in a wetsuit, he's taken seriously?"

Enza also says she's glad former Ontario Tory riding association president Cameron MacLeod and prominent West End Toronto Tory Carol Jamieson left Enza's campaign earlier this month. "They wanted me to have a 'fuck you' attitude, but I wanted to be more serious," Enza says. "I wanted a platform and they said, 'No platform.' I told [communications director] Ian Ross we must have fun but we must also be serious. I want to help people, not hurt them."

Enza, who lip-synched Annie Lennox's "I Need a Man" at a Who's Who fundraising bash at Toronto's Mockingbird nightclub last week, points to the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City, when drag queens, fed up with being harassed by the cops, finally fought back. "If it wasn't for those drag queens, Gay Pride [which was created as a way of commemorating the riots] would not exist," Enza says. "Drag queens are the ones who said, 'This is enough.'"

"The whole point of me doing this in drag," she continues, "is it's time we came out of the dark. It's time for drag queens to move from nighttime to the daytime world. We have such a wonderful wealth of drag culture—we're honest, we have glitzy outfits, big hair and I have 100 per cent great legs."

There's no mistaking that. In fact, if Enza makes the ballot on January 31, this story may have legs too. Then we'll see what media pundits have to



Enza Anderson: model candidate

say. "People say I'm a media whore," Enza says. "But I'm not. I'm a media slut. I'm not making money and whores make money and I think politicians are the worst of the lot."

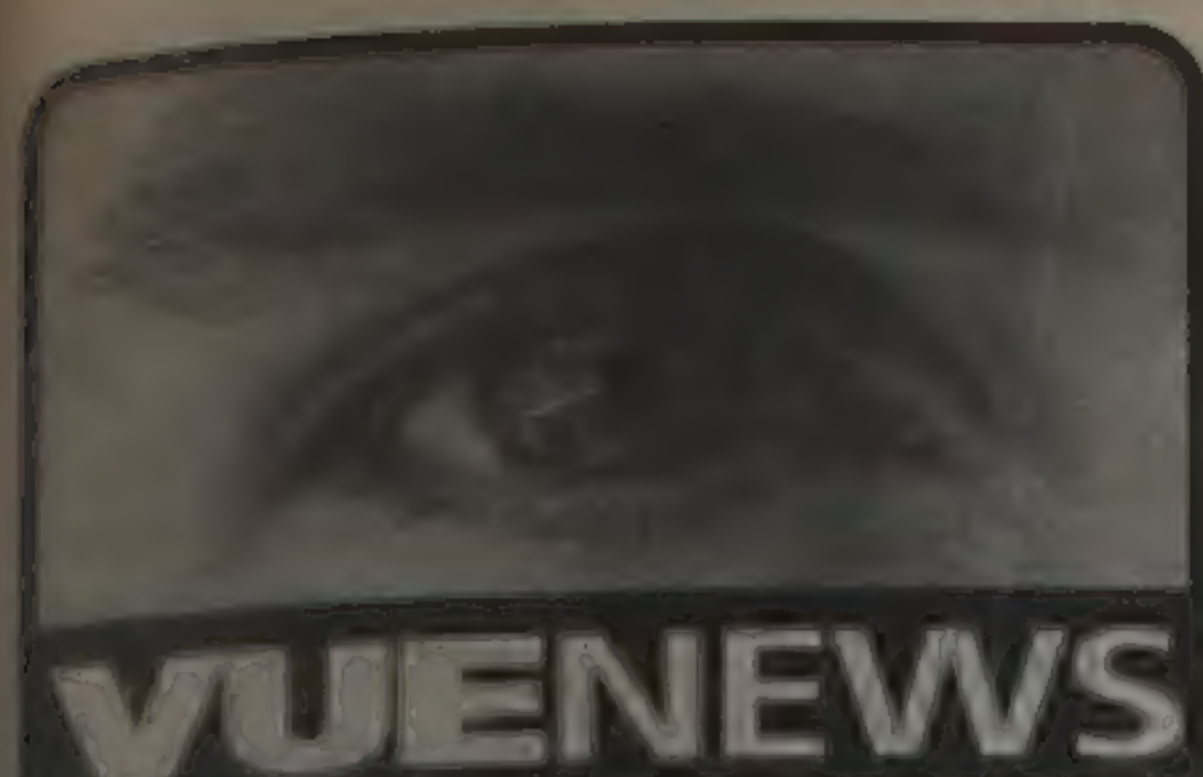
Results of the March 8 to 15 mail-in first-ballot leadership vote will be announced on March 20. If you become a Canadian Alliance member by March 1, you can participate. Surf to www.canadianalliance.ca or www.enza.ca for details. ☉

anonymous listeners doing damage with quack advice.

I know what he means. For the sake of research, I went online to several chatrooms to publicly (and interactively) confess. Initially, I joined a "current issues" chatroom, where, after being repeatedly flashed with "ASL?" (age/sex/location) and queried on the size of my breasts, I found a relatively mature cyber-pal to confess to. He commented that while his views were free and impartial, "a specialist could do a better job."

Next, I entered a Christian chatroom and was accused of Catholic-bashing until I "confessed" that I was a journalist. During my "dialogue," I was told that true confession was between the sinner and God, much along the lines of Oscar Wilde's quote that "It is the confession, not the priest, that gives us absolution." And the general consensus was that confession isn't any different in cyberspace than in private. "It's just like going to a psychiatrist, you're not going to get judged," one pal wrote. This sentiment is loudly echoed by Notproud.com's Brazier. "Beneath the cloak of anonymity, you can be as candid as you like without fear of being discovered," he says. "You can't walk up to your boss and say what you really think but anonymously, by posting it to thousands, you get this sense of justice."

And in some cases, Internet confessions—even religious ones—are far more effective at allowing people to achieve a higher level of faith. Jade



VUE NEWS
YOUR ALTERNATIVE GUIDE TO
WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON...

LABOUR

Tight picket defence

OTTAWA—Canadian unions recaptured the right to picket secondary locations last week, a key tactic during labour disputes that's been outlawed in much of the country for nearly four decades. The Supreme Court of Canada issued a 9-0 ruling on Thursday granting striking workers permission to picket places like stores and distributors which carry products made by companies embroiled in disputes. Citing the importance of free speech in general and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms specifically, the decision declared that the protective code "allows a person to speak not only for the sake of expression itself, but also to advocate change, attempting to persuade others in the hope of improving one's life and perhaps the wider social, political and economic environment."

The ruling is rooted in a 1997 skirmish in Saskatoon between Pepsi-Cola Canada and Local 558 of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union. The union instigated this judgment by challenging an injunction forbidding members from picketing a hotel where replaced workers were housed and the homes of several managers during a strike at their Pepsi plant. While the Supreme Court maintains that private homes cannot be the target of picketers, giving them access to stores will allow unions to confront both the public and other businesses that depend on a company that isn't in accord with its workers.

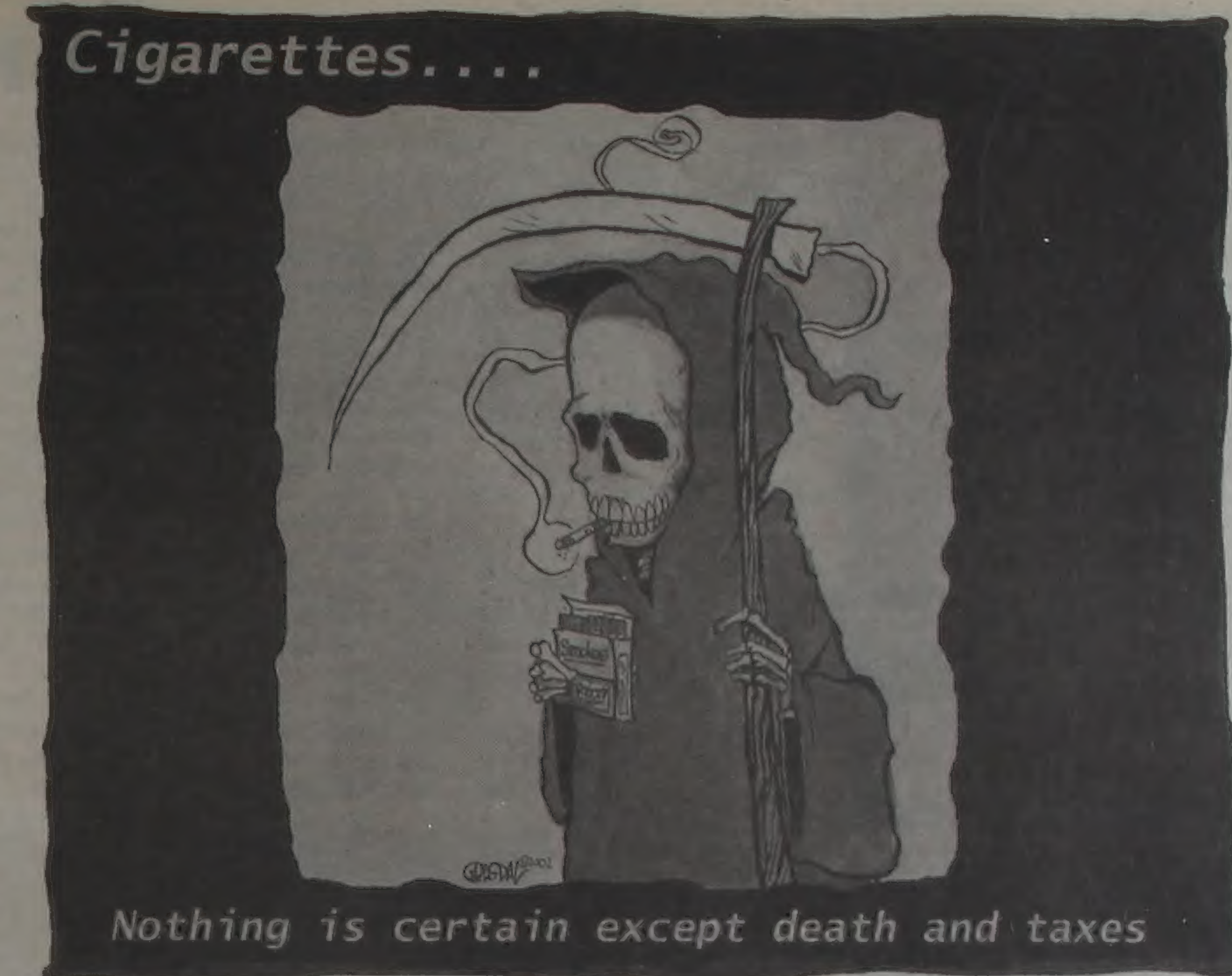
"Workers have the right now to follow the company's tactics and inflict economic harm in response," Larry Kowalchuk, a lawyer who represented the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, told Canadian Press. Although Peter Woolford, vice-president of policy for the Retail Council of Canada, predicted to CP that the ruling will hurt union-management relations and lead to some "very unpleasant situations," Canadian Labour Congress President Ken Georgetti countered, "That's why companies don't like it—because it's effective."

Alberta union reps echoed that comment. "Part of a strike or job action is to put economic pressure on a business or on an entity," Alberta Federation of Labour president Les Steel said to the *Edmonton Journal*, "and if that means a company has multiple sites, you can put more pressure on them and force them to sit down and do collective bargaining." —DAN RUBINSTEIN

POLITICS

Pesky prejudices, not Peschisolido, dismembering Alliance

OTTAWA—Just when Stockwell Day steps down to begin campaigning for



his still warm leadership chair against a headline-hungry drag queen who spits out more straight talk than the rest of the candidates—in other words, just when things are getting back to normal for the Canadian Alliance—another political scandal has hit the national family feud squad. This time it's the party's pesky old nemesis, racism, that's dragging the in-fighting back into the spotlight.

Saskatchewan Alliance MP Roy Bailey's comment that Filipino-born Liberal MP Rey Pagtakhan was a "Chinese chap" who shouldn't have been named the country's veterans affairs minister because he wasn't born in Canada was tough enough for British Columbia Alliance MP Joe Peschisolido to stomach. But the party brass's failure to show much concern over Bailey's regressive reasoning was too much for Peschisolido, whose Richmond riding has a large Asian-Canadian community. "I have to admit I was very disappointed and disillusioned with the non-response to that issue by the party," he said on Sunday after renouncing his Alliance membership and rejoining the Liberals, who he worked for as a youth organizer during the 1990 leadership race. "It crystallized for me the importance of treating all Canadians as equal."

Peschisolido's defection, unlike Bailey's blurring, sent the Alliance scurrying into full damage-control mode. Interim leader John Reynolds told Southam News the Bailey angle was a "smokescreen" for 38-year-old Peschisolido. "What Joe has done today is probably a good example of why people lose respect for politicians," said Reynolds, adding (and sounding very juvenile as he did so) that Peschisolido hadn't been an active participant in caucus lately anyway. "You run in an election campaign for a political party," continued Reynolds, "and when it becomes opportunistic in your own mind you just switch and make this statement, trying to blame it on one of your colleagues."

While there may be some merit in

Reynolds's call for Peschisolido to resign and run again in a by-election, he's missing the boat on one major point: politicians lose respect by uttering the type of remarks Bailey made. And if other politicians jump ship to escape a sinking party that's drawn to controversy like the *Titanic* to icebergs, that's their parliamentary prerogative. —DAN RUBINSTEIN

Prisoners of more

WASHINGTON—As grinning Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld posed for photos with U.S. soldiers guarding Taliban and al-Qaeda prisoners in Guantanamo Bay's makeshift prison on Sunday, grimacing White House officials scrambled to downplay a leaked memo exposing Secretary of State Colin Powell's opposition to his government's refusal to give prisoner-of-war status to its (You Can't Show Them on Television!) captives.

"The Secretary of State has requested that you reconsider that decision," the memo said about Bush's stance, a policy that's faced a landslide of criticism from human rights groups and European leaders. "Specially," continued the memo, which was obtained by the *Washington Post*, "he asked that you conclude that [the Geneva Convention's] PoW treatment code] does apply to both al-Qaeda and the Taliban." In Cuba, however, a steadfast Rumsfeld said the prisoners "are not PoWs" and "will not be determined to be PoWs." In Washington, White House spokesman Sean McCormick said the memo was a "draft" that "did not accurately reflect" Powell's position.

Meanwhile, VP Dick Cheney is refusing to co-operate with the investigation into Enron's collapse because it could weaken the presidency and Justice Department officials are going out of their way to make sure TV cameras get enough footage of John Walker Lindh to keep the patriotic blood boiling. And the U.S. Declaration of Independence says all men are

created equal. —DAN RUBINSTEIN

ECONOMY

Martin defends declining dollar

OTTAWA—Finance Minister Paul Martin has issued a statement showing that the Liberals are beginning to get antsy about a loonie that's heading down to a value of 60 cents (U.S.).

The slide of the dollar has continued unabated against the American buck and the euro, despite statistics indicating that the Canadian economy, when prorated for population, is outperforming our neighbours to the south.

Martin's statement featured a combination of frustration over the unfairness of currency speculation and worked as an international advertisement for the relative health of Canada's economy. "No one is happy with what has been happening with the Canadian dollar, certainly not the Government of Canada," he said.

In fact, Martin only just fell short of calling international investors ignorant about the status of Canada's economy. Martin and his fellow Liberals feel that the low dollar is not the sign of a weak Canadian economy, but of an economy that has been underestimated by uninformed international investors.

"In Canada's case, I really wonder whether currency markets are fully taking into account today's reality," Martin said. "We are the only G7 country with a balanced budget this year. That is our fifth in a row. Our debt-to-GDP ratio has fallen by 20 percentage points since 1995, the largest drop of any major industrialized nation and it's going to continue to drop next year." Martin said that Canada's repayment of \$17 billion worth of debt over the last year should be seen as an indication that no other nation is as serious as Canada about getting its books back in the black.

Still, Martin's diatribe did little to shake the dollar out of its doldrum.

—STEVEN SANDOR

VUEPOINT

BY DAVE JOHNSTON

Rebel browsing

In the technology industry, companies used to live by the adage "Innovate or die." After last week's legal action by AOL Time Warner against Microsoft, the new mantra might be "Why innovate when you can sue?"

In the wake of Microsoft's antitrust troubles concerning its Internet Explorer web browser and the Windows operating system, AOL Time Warner has chosen to sue the software giant over damage done to its own web browser, Netscape. As Microsoft spokesperson Vivek Varna charged in an interview with AOL-owned CNN, "Every chance AOL Time Warner gets, they choose litigation over innovation. Microsoft is investing in building products. AOL is investing in lawyers and lobbyists to put roadblocks in Microsoft's way." And as Steve Axxin, a prominent U.S. antitrust attorney, also told CNN, "This is a battle of the media titans that has been looming for some time."

This is also a battle to decide which corporation will dictate who will control the public's portal into the Internet. The dotcom collapse has proven how volatile business can be out there in the ether and that the real way to get rich is to provide the means to see it all. That done, you can pick and choose what businesses get moved up to your virtual Main Street. You can also potentially decide what people can and cannot see.

AOL is nearly there, with millions of subscribers on its online network and a built-in warehouse of appealing content through its entertainment holdings. Microsoft software, on the other hand, lives in millions of homes and businesses, running the very computers that AOL needs to get people to use its service.

What's worse is that, despite their questionable practices, Microsoft makes a slightly better product. Netscape, in the meantime, has only churned out increasingly worthless hunks of code. I use an Apple G4 and Netscape's pride and joy craps out at every turn, no matter what I do, while Internet Explorer lumbers smoothly along. Rather than beat Microsoft with a superior product, AOL would rather cry to mommy.

But the difference is marginal. The maturity of Web applications hasn't given consumers simplified access to the Internet—they just get saddled with fatter, more unstable, more taxing hunks of software. Innovation seems to have taken a backseat, even with dangerous competition in the marketplace coming from the underground. New free browsers like Opera plain work better, and there will be more to come. While the titans litigate, the mice shall innovate. Enjoy it while you can, everyone, because your days of free access to the information you want may be numbered, no matter which corporate side wins. ☹

The Fiery Cross: isn't it romantic?

Diana Gabaldon chafes under "romance novelist" label

BY DANA MCNAIRN

So you think you know your genre fiction? Try this on for size. A smartass World War II combat nurse trips over some rocks and finds herself flung back in time to the Jacobite uprisings in 18th-century Scotland.

Out on the misty moors, for her own protection, she's forced to marry a rugged Highland cattle thief and warrior. They mostly fight and smack each other around. Oh, and have sex constantly.

Meet the gallant 18th-century Scotsman Jamie Fraser and his time-travelling wife, Claire Beauchamp Randall Fraser. Now meet the American author of this strange tale, the petite and dark-haired mother of three, Diana Gabaldon. Dr. Gabaldon, actually, who has just published *The Fiery Cross*, the fifth novel about this unlikely couple in her lusty "Outlander" series. So what are these books? Romance? Fantasy? Historical fiction? Sci-fi? Military saga? Whatever Gabaldon had set out to achieve with the Outlander books, they defy simple classification. It's a point she's painfully aware of herself and goes to great lengths to explain. She knows she's viewed as a genre interloper. If it's romance, it's too damn violent. The history buffs hate all the time-travelling characters hopping around effortlessly between the 18th and 20th centuries. If it's fantasy, why is there so much grisly military minutiae and no talking beasts?

If it ain't trope...

Gabaldon herself calls her books historical fiction. She says she has nothing against romance writers; it's just not what she writes. To prove her point, she cites the many romance tropes she's quite deliberately broken. Her books are twice as long (if not longer) than typical romances and are written mostly in the first person. Claire is older than Jamie. He's a virgin when they meet; she's not. Gabaldon counts on her fingers as she continues listing the differences. The two lovers don't get it on until well after page 300. The victim in a graphic rape scene is Jamie, not Claire. And sin of sins, Jamie has red hair. Evidently, this is the stuff that outrages romance fans—and Gabaldon has the e-mails to prove it.

Gabaldon shrugs her shoulders, sighs and stops talking. Clearly, she's been down this road before. For the record, I didn't ask how she'd classify her books. The publisher had already warned me that talking romance makes the author grouchy and besides, there were other questions I had to ask. Yet

Gabaldon neatly avoided direct answers to most of them and kept coming back to her well-rehearsed diatribe about romantic fiction and the wearying idiocy of some of her fans. More bothersome was the fact that Gabaldon's answers were almost verbatim from interviews she'd already given and posted online, like, three years ago. It was my turn to sigh.

You know Who

A scientist for 12 years (she has degrees in zoology and marine biology and a Ph.D. in behavioural ecology), Gabaldon still calls

Outlander her "practice" novel for the detective novel she really wanted to write. It was scribbling she never intended to show anyone, as she had previously only done a little freelance work, writing software reviews for PC and *Byte* magazines and scripting some *Scrooge McDuck* comics for Walt Disney. She decided that since she knew how to do research, not fiction, she'd practise on a historical novel. "That way," she says, "if I had no imagination of my own, I could steal things from the historical record." Turning on the TV by chance one night gave her the historical setting she'd been looking for. On a *Dr. Who* rerun, she saw a Scottish character, a young hottie in a kilt who lived in 1745. Gabaldon smiles at the memory. His name was Jamie. Gabaldon was off to the races.

Much later, she explains, after getting into an on-line argument with a man over what it feels like to actually give birth, Gabaldon posted a passage she had written on just that subject—a section from the unpublished novel she hadn't meant to show anyone. The feedback was stupendous. The rest is history and a publisher's wet dream. *Outlander* was published in 1991. The gigantic *Dragonfly in Amber* followed, after which Gabaldon retired from her post at Arizona State University. Her third massive book, *Voyager*, made the *New York Times* bestseller list and the enormous *Drums of Autumn* had a first printing of 155,000. There are now over two million copies of Gabaldon's books in print.

Not bad for a scientist trained in animal behaviour and statistics. "People think scientists are these rigid thinkers, logical and orderly, and they also think writing is deeply intuitive," Gabaldon says. "But I think both require a skill or ability to look at chaos and pick out all the patterns from it." She says scientists can look at a "confusing array of data and intuitively find the impor-

tant things," which is exactly what a novelist does. She thinks it's "about finding a pattern."

No bodice business but my own

"You know, I like romance novels," Gabaldon interjects, returning once again to her favourite topic. "But I think most romance writers are rewriting 'Cinderella' or 'Beauty and the Beast,' and my books aren't." She agrees she provides a passionate love story with plenty of sex, but says the resemblance stops there. "Some people write me saying they think romances are trash, but they love my books. Others say they never read anything but romance, so were initially put off to read my big historical novels and now they're so glad they did." Gabaldon

circle of ancient standing-stones and ends up falling through the stones back to 1743. When Claire appears, stomping and swearing over the moors like a modern woman, Gabaldon knew she had to stick to a time-travel theme. "[Claire] refused to talk like an 18th-century person," she says with a smile.

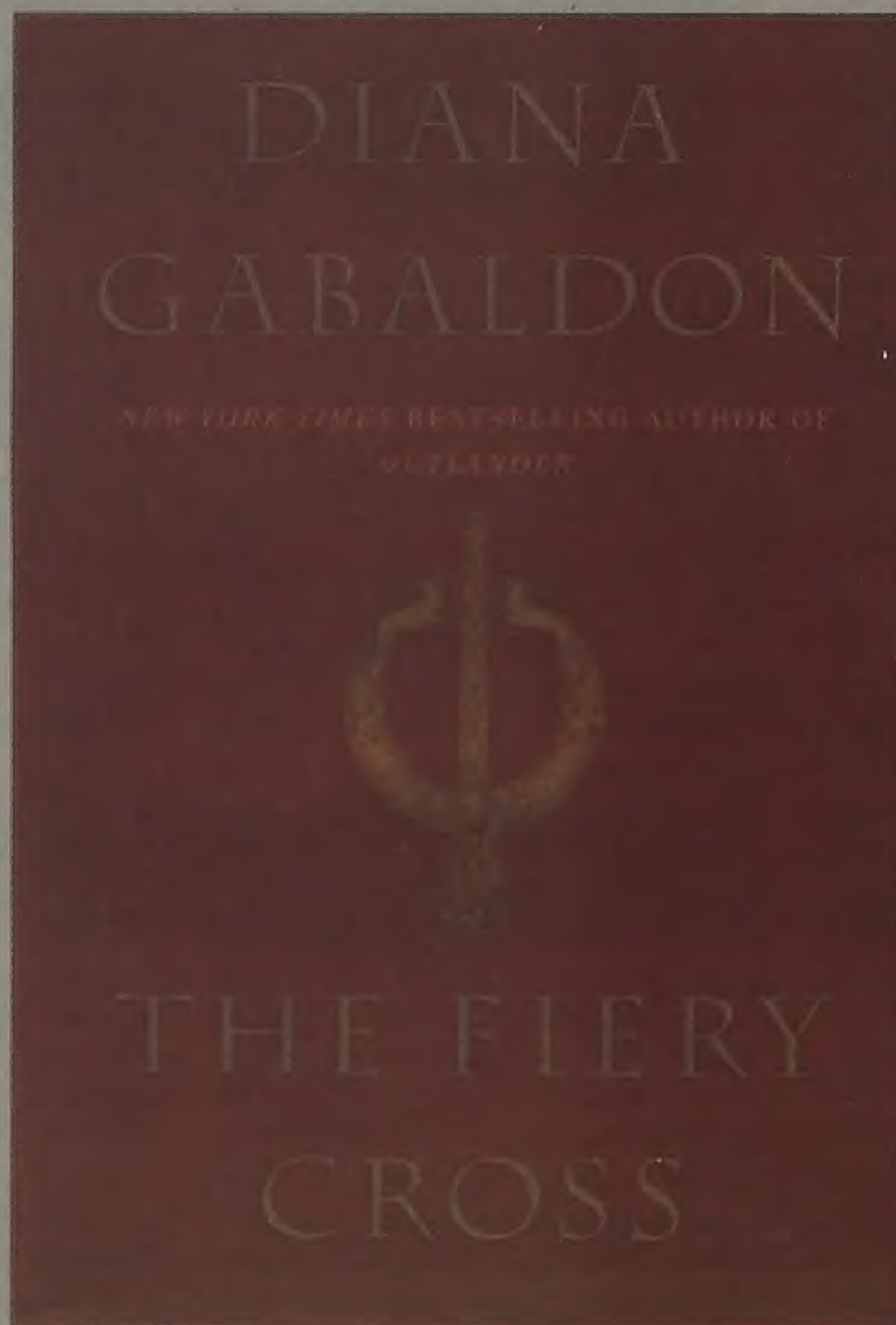
Once Claire gets over the shock of gritty life in the Highlands, she hatches a plan to save Scotland from the evil English by using her knowledge of the historical future. The male lead, gallant Highlander Jamie Fraser, is—duh—tall, rugged and handsome. Claire's plucky. That means she throws tantrums, defies authority and charms her way out of (non-sexual) sticky situations. Jamie's broodingly brave. That means he seduces Claire and ultimately tames her by making her the lady of his estate. Throughout the course of the series, Jamie and Claire must cope with political intrigue, bloody battles, more time-travelling, continent-crossing, betrayals, childbirth, violent deaths and sex, sex, sex.

Cross purposes

In between *Drums of Autumn* and the truly gargantuan *The Fiery Cross* (which weighs in at just under 1,000 pages), Gabaldon published *The Outlandish Companion*, the *Silmarillion* of the series, so to speak. She says she still gets complaints from fans about that. "Fan reviews are a distraction at best and an annoyance at worst," she sighs again. Evidently quite a few bought the compendium thinking it was another installment in the Jamie and Claire saga. She has more e-mails to prove it.

"Some just don't get what nonfiction is," she says shaking her head.

The fans are happier now that *The Fiery Cross* is out. This time around, Claire and Jamie are tending a homestead on Fraser's Ridge in the colony of North Carolina. The date is 1771—and we all know what war is just around the corner. More uprisings and the heroic husband-and-wife-duo fight in battles not their own. Except that the book ends a mere two years later. Gabaldon will have to write a sixth (and, at this rate, possibly a seventh) book to take Jamie and Claire through the American Revolution, which is what readers have been waiting for since *Drums of Autumn*. There's also a fair amount of piss, shit and soiled diapers to get through—literally hundreds of pages of it—as the aging colonial couple contemplates being plucky and broodingly brave in their middle age.



shrugs again.

Her publisher initially shrugged too, and marketed the first book as a romance. "They also pointed out that a sci-fi bestseller means 15,000 copies and a romance bestseller means 500,000 copies," Gabaldon recalls. "Made sense to me." But she was adamant about no heaving "man bosoms" on the front covers. No Fabios lasciviously clutching half-naked damsels have ever adorned any of her books. "I know what Jamie and Claire look like," she says. "People need to use their imaginations more."

Regardless of their covers and where the books are shelved in the bookstores, they are spectacularly popular. The female lead, Claire Randall, is a 27-year-old Englishwoman, a British army nurse just released from duty after the Second World War. On a second honeymoon trip to Scotland with her researcher-husband, she spies a coven of witches dancing around a

Shelf LIFE

By DANA MCNAIRN

Reviewing my options

Last season's roller coaster ride has the Canadian publishing industry still looking green, wobbly and ready to throw up. But why should anyone care about books the newspapers barely review and nobody reads anyway? This week's special Inside Books supplement seems like a good opportunity to evaluate the ever-shrinking newspaper book section and the much-maligned role of book reviewers.

That this country's intellectual space is shriveling is not news. Newspaper op/ed pieces are paragons of brevity and the photographs just keep getting bigger and bigger. Book review sections are scrawny and anemic. Academic defenses of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Sex in the City* are what currently pass for rigorous intellectual debate. There's room for these slight entertainments—yes, let's have some fun—but not at the expense of other pursuits, like literature and rhetoric. Assume an audience needs, wants or requires dumbing down and reap

the rewards accordingly. Trust that the audience is looking for a little bit more and the rewards are far sweeter. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy either way.

The Globe and Mail, happily, still has a book review section, but it has trimmed pages and dropped a columnist. The *New York Times Review of Books* has also snipped and parsed. The *National Post* has gotten out of the books biz. *Saturday Night*, long an important venue for excerpts from important new books, disappeared in a blaze of red ink and one can only hope that the venerable magazine's umpteenth reincarnation in May will bring back excerpts. As a freelance reviewer within the Southam chain (now owned by CanWest Global), I've personally felt the book space cuts. Cost-cutting, space-saving "roundups" of titles are now the norm for more and more newspapers and magazines. As the *Globe* pointed out, the less room devoted to books—i.e., the debate of ideas—the smaller a country's intellectual space. This is not good for anyone. The papers grouse that publishers have no money for advertising, but it's not as though the sports or style sections enjoy huge advertiser support, either. That may not be a new argument, but it's still valid. Newspapers need loss-leader sections, like sports, like book reviews, in order to expand their subscriber base in order to charge more for the ads that pay for the other sections.

But it begs the question: is news-

paper criticism becoming irrelevant? Does it really matter what a reviewer thinks when you can log onto the Internet and find a chatroom of similarly-minded people—or vent your spleen on a website of your own? Yet, despite what some refer to as "digital democracy," reviewers are still important. As easy as it is for a book to sink out of sight after a bad review (or two or three), there are books that would have disappeared altogether had it not been for reviewers trumpeting their merits. Think *Ditch*, *All Families Are Psychotic* or *A Cargo of Orchids* versus *A Student of Weather*, *Kingfisher Days* or *Afterimage*.

I didn't start writing book reviews out of a perverse desire to bash authors. I also didn't start because of a hubristic need to help anoint the next Giller-winning icon or CanLit scion. I write because I am passionate about books. Period. I write about books and authors because I am genuinely curious and care about literature, good and bad. I write because I know that no matter how cunningly presented my argument may be for or against a book, someone else will think my head is up my ass. Ahh, debate is a beautiful thing. Providing the space for the cultivation of ideas makes the arts flourish. And a thriving arts scene is the cornerstone of a civilized society. Let me put it in less grandiose terms: I don't write about books because I think I'm so smart; I do it because I'm hungry to learn more. ☺

someone is pouring out their life online, and it's along the lines of 'Yeah, me too,' it's like 'I'm alright.' I've found my herd."

Fox agrees. "This is real life you're picking up on," he says, referring to the explicitness of the cyber realm. "You discover you're not the only one, and when it comes to certain confessions, you're not as unique as you think."

One visitor to confessional sites puts it more bluntly. "Whenever I feel like the world's a great place with wonderful people, I feel the need to stop by [a confession site] and remind myself of the depth of human idiocy," he writes. "Then I go away for six months until I feel the need to do the same again."

With an estimated 700 million

users online, there's no dearth of such idiocy. But that's really only a mirror of the real world, where—face it—we are fascinated with sexual peccadilloes, interpersonal foibles and freaks who light their nose hairs on fire. Basically, we're nosy. "Peering into others' trials and tribulations is comforting," Brazier says. "When you match yourself against a compulsive overeater, your late-night snacks don't seem so bad anymore—misery loves company, especially when it's more miserable."

As Fox sees it, cyber-confession is an efficient case of unloading what's been niggling the conscience. "To say, 'I'm a guy wearing girl's panties at the office and no one knows,' it's bound to make you feel better." ☺

Media Jungle

Continued from page 6

Catherine Devlin, a Christian cross-dresser, initially used the anonymity of chatrooms to reach out to others in the transgender community. Eventually he gained the confidence to use his real name, dress openly as a woman and finally declare his faith—while sporting a flowery dress—to God online.

"I don't see the Internet as fundamentally a spiritual place," he says, suddenly dropping his feminine voice. "I feel that faith demands a whole, full-bodied, emotional encounter. But I think the Internet presents us with an unprecedented opportunity. When

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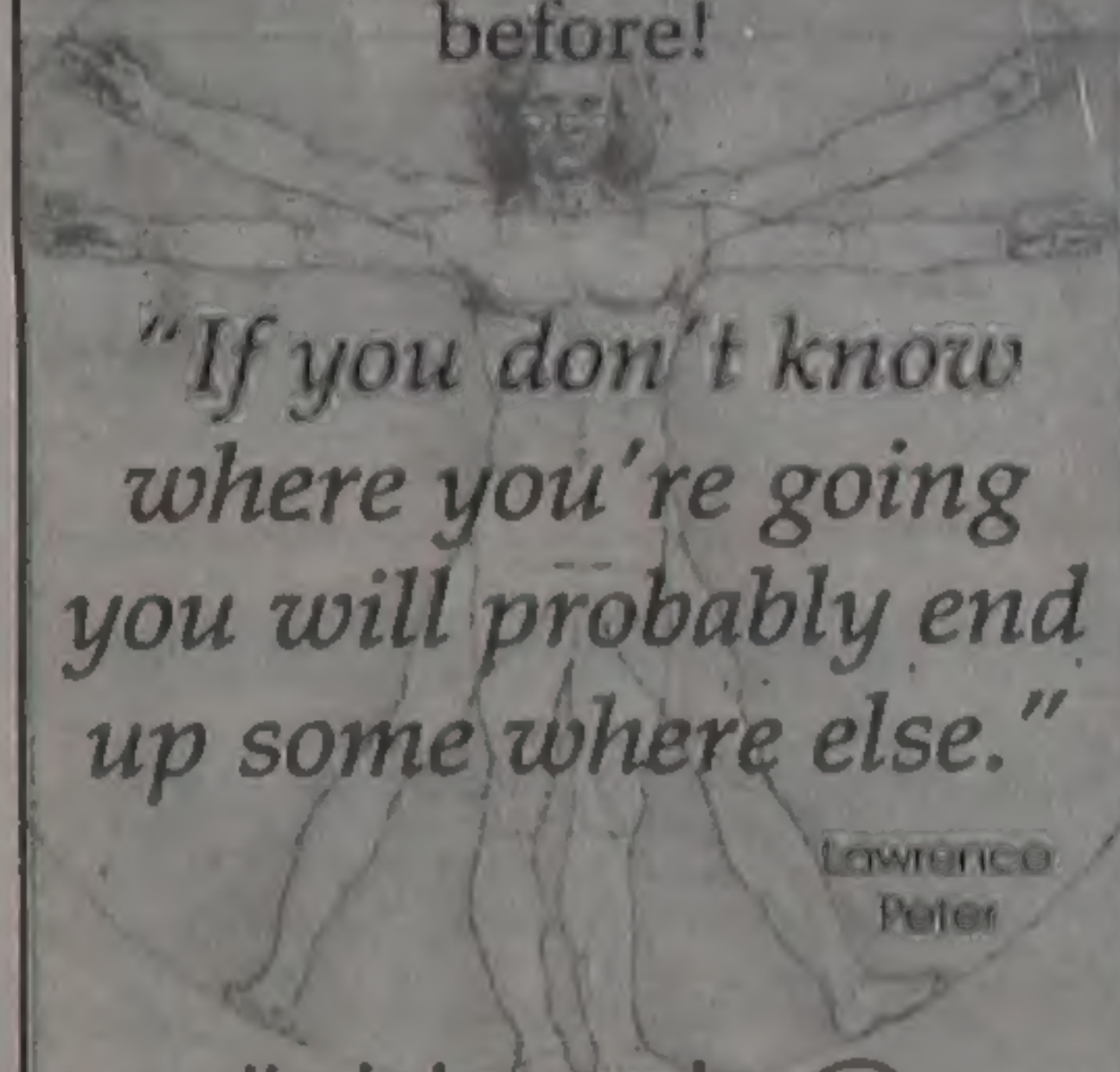
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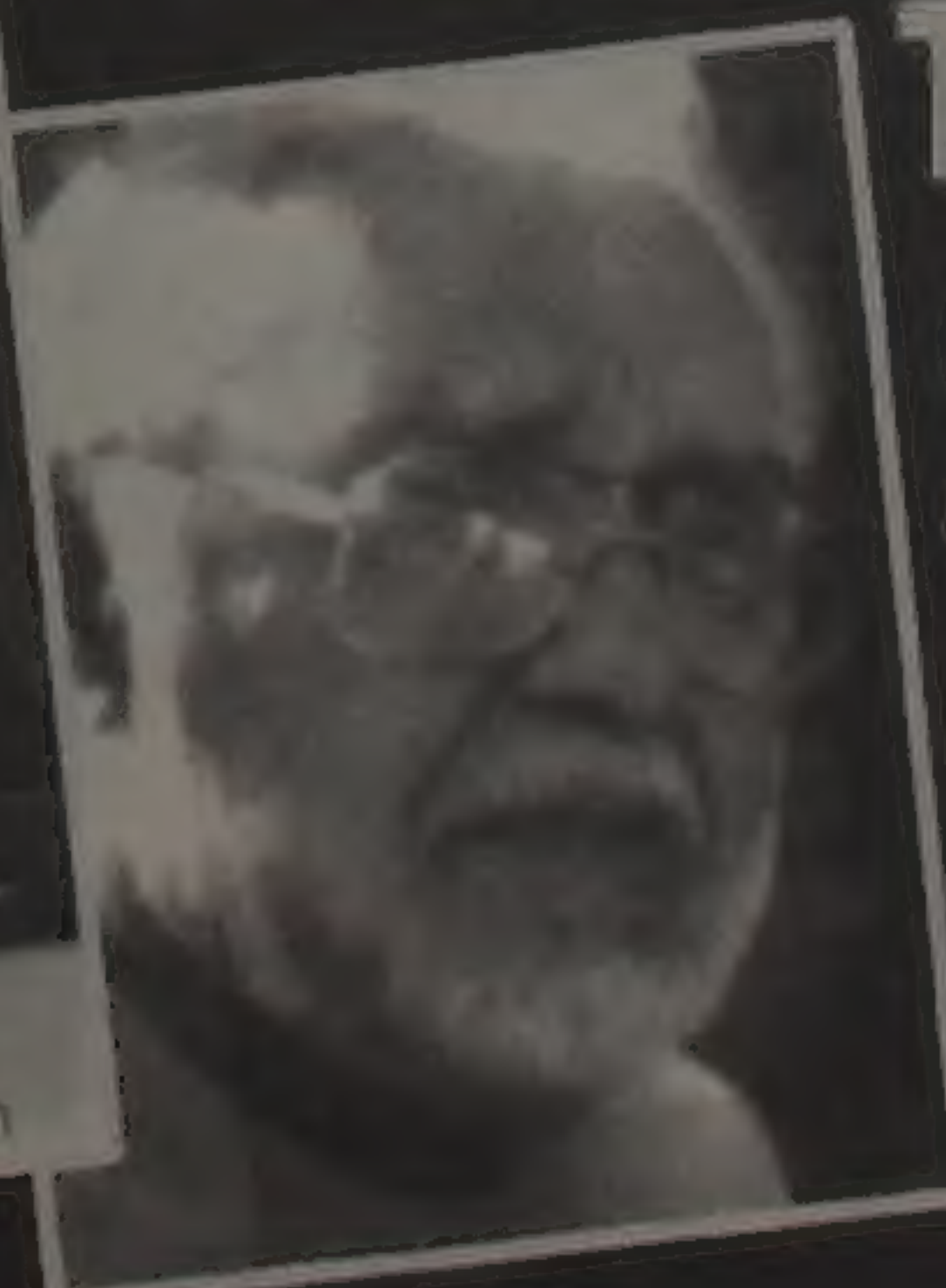
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The magical mystery tour

Carter Beats the Devil wields plenty of literary abracadabra

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Science fiction, I've often heard it said, just doesn't work on the stage. Ventriloquism, for reasons that are more obvious, loses something when it's broadcast over the radio. (Although that didn't seem to stop Edgar Bergen from becoming a huge radio star.) And, by rights, stage magic just shouldn't work in a novel—there just doesn't seem to be a way to make reading about a guy in a turban making an elephant magically appear onstage as thrilling as watching it actually happen in front of you.

And yet, Glen David Gold's terrific debut novel *Carter Beats the Devil* manages exactly that—a magic act as thrilling and inexplicable as any of the improbable stunts Gold's hero, Charles Carter (a.k.a. "Carter the Great"), miraculously performs throughout this wild, action-packed story. This is one of those books where you get the wonderful feeling that the author has meticulously researched every detail of the time period and the setting—and then has decided to throw all the facts out the window and have fun instead. There really was a magician named Charles Carter in the 1920s—he was one of several flamboyant showmen who thrived in Harry Houdini's shadow during the so-called "Golden Age of Magic," and he really did perform several of the tricks Gold describes in his book, including the elaborate faceoff between himself and the Lord of the Underworld that gives this book its title. (Gold obviously has enormous affection for the larger-than-life personalities of the magicians of this period; the book contains several full-colour reproductions of publicity posters from the era, in which tuxedoed gentlemen are shown calmly consorting with all manner of demons, imps and spectres from beyond the

grave.) But it's Gold's inspired decision to place Carter at the centre of an adventure story that gives *Carter Beats the Devil* its zing: not only must Carter unravel a complex political conspiracy that leads all the way up to President Harding, but he must defeat his lifelong arch-enemy, a vengeful, twisted rival magician named Mysterioso.

The anti-Doug Henning

I love the notion of an evil stage magician, and I love even more the idea of having the equivalent of a "wizard's duel" from a fantasy novel take place in a darkened theatre, with both combatants using stage trickery to try and kill each other. Gold really outdoes himself with this sequence; it lasts

Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay, which dealt with a pair of enthusiastic young comic book creators (one of whom, as it happens, was also an accomplished escape artist). I bet Carter would have gotten along famously with Kavalier and Clay—all three characters boy geniuses, inveterate tinkers with seemingly inexhaustible imaginations who deal with the grief and the tragedy in their lives by pouring it into their work and transforming it into crowd-pleasing pop. (Actually, it's a shame they don't meet one another; Carter could have introduced K&C to his friend Philo Farnsworth, the inventor of television—together, they could have invented the Saturday morning cartoon decades ahead of anyone else.)

A small Phoe

If Gold has a weakness, it's his female characters. Carter has two romantic relationships in the book: one as a youth with a feisty tomboy named Annabelle and one as a man with a beautiful blind girl named Phoebe. Both are tremendously appealing characters, but there's something artificial about them as well; both gals are just a little too swell to be believed. (The said, the long, tentative conversation Carter and Phoebe have that leads up to their first kiss is one of the quietest, sweetest passages in the book.) And perhaps that thinness is partly deliberate—a nod to the convention of a magic show, in which the magician gets all the best lines and the "beautiful assistant" stays quietly on the sidelines.

Magic shows tend to be ephemeral, no matter how spectacular the effects that the magician pulls off, and, on one level, I wouldn't be surprised if *Carter Beats the Devil* fades from my

memory long before a lot of other less immediately entertaining novels do. But the again a book that contains everything I've told you about already—not to mention an eight-foot-tall giant, a ship of South Sea pirates and all five Marx Brothers—is hard to forget. ☐

Carter Beats the Devil

By Glen David Gold • Hyperion Books
• 483 pp. • \$34.95



more than 70 pages and it's some kind of crazy masterpiece of stylish, old-fashioned high suspense. (The first showdown between Carter and Mysterioso, much earlier in the book, is a real humdinger as well.) The book's high-spirited plotting and its vivid evocation of the vibrant "junk culture" of an earlier era merits comparison with Michael Chabon's wonderful, Pulitzer Prize-winning novel from last year, *The*

The Fiery Cross

Continued from page 8

Why not call Gabaldon's books popular fiction? They're smart, literate and frequently very funny. In spite of myself, I really did laugh aloud while reading *The Fiery Cross*—and not because all the muddy humping in the bushes was comical. Why is it still necessary for some to dismiss Gabaldon's writing as "guilty pleasure?" She's a terrific storyteller, if nothing else. She can craft situations and characters like any other "real" author,

she can believably propel her plot and her prose style usually manages under the weight of all the adjectives. (Here's lovely Claire meditating in *The Fiery Cross* before doctoring the locals: "I never prayed consciously when preparing for surgery, but I did look for something—something I could not describe, but always recognized; a certain quietness of soul, the detachment of mind in which I could balance on the knife edge between ruthlessness and compassion, at once engaged in utmost intimacy with the body under my hands and capable of

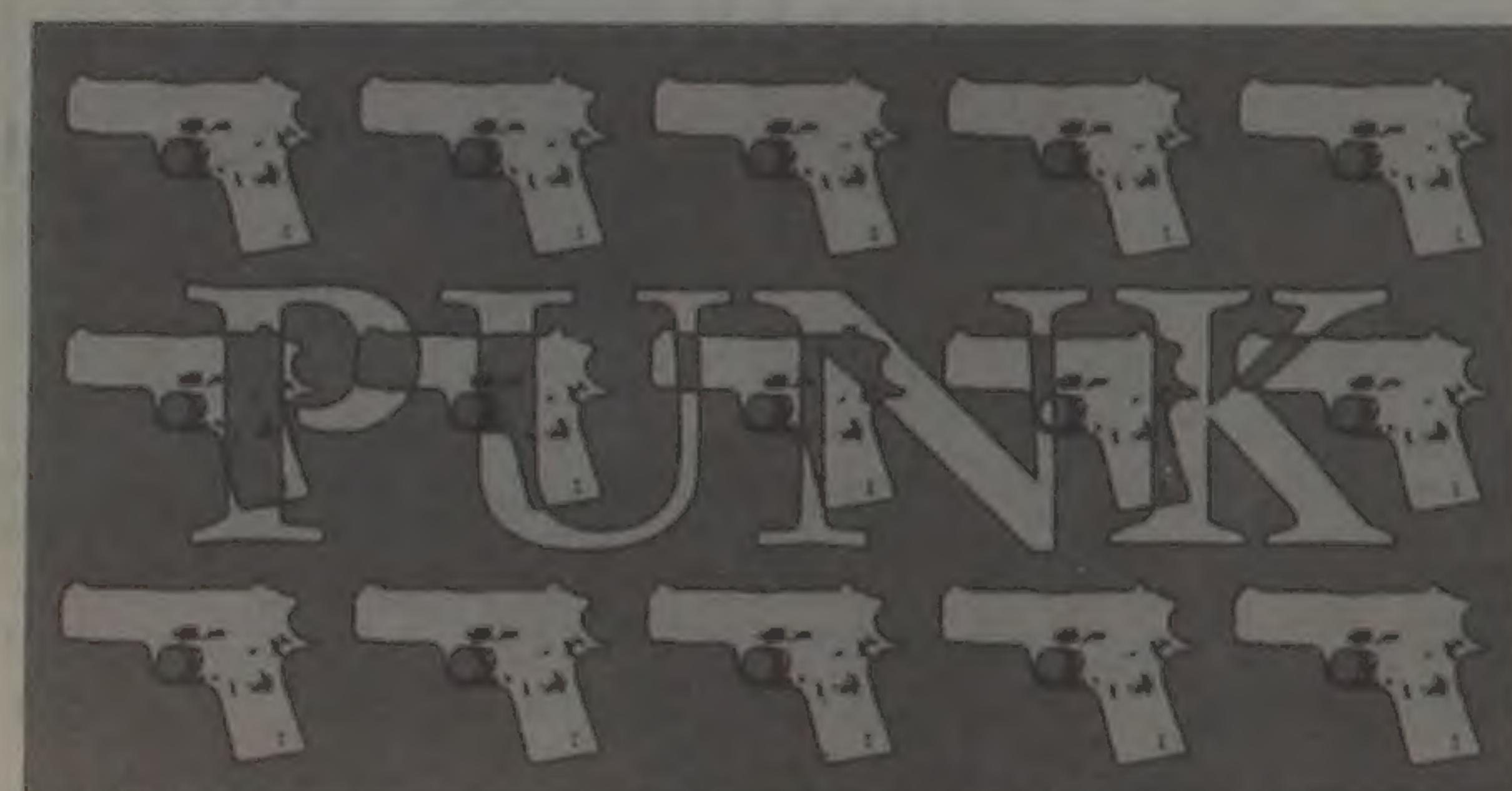
destroying what I touched in the name of healing.")

So, popular fiction it is. Still no airport paperback? Back to general fiction, then. I suspect Gabaldon would like nothing better. She'll earn more respect from critics, garner more book reviews in the snooty mags and climb out of the bodice-ripper ghetto without losing those robust romantic advances.

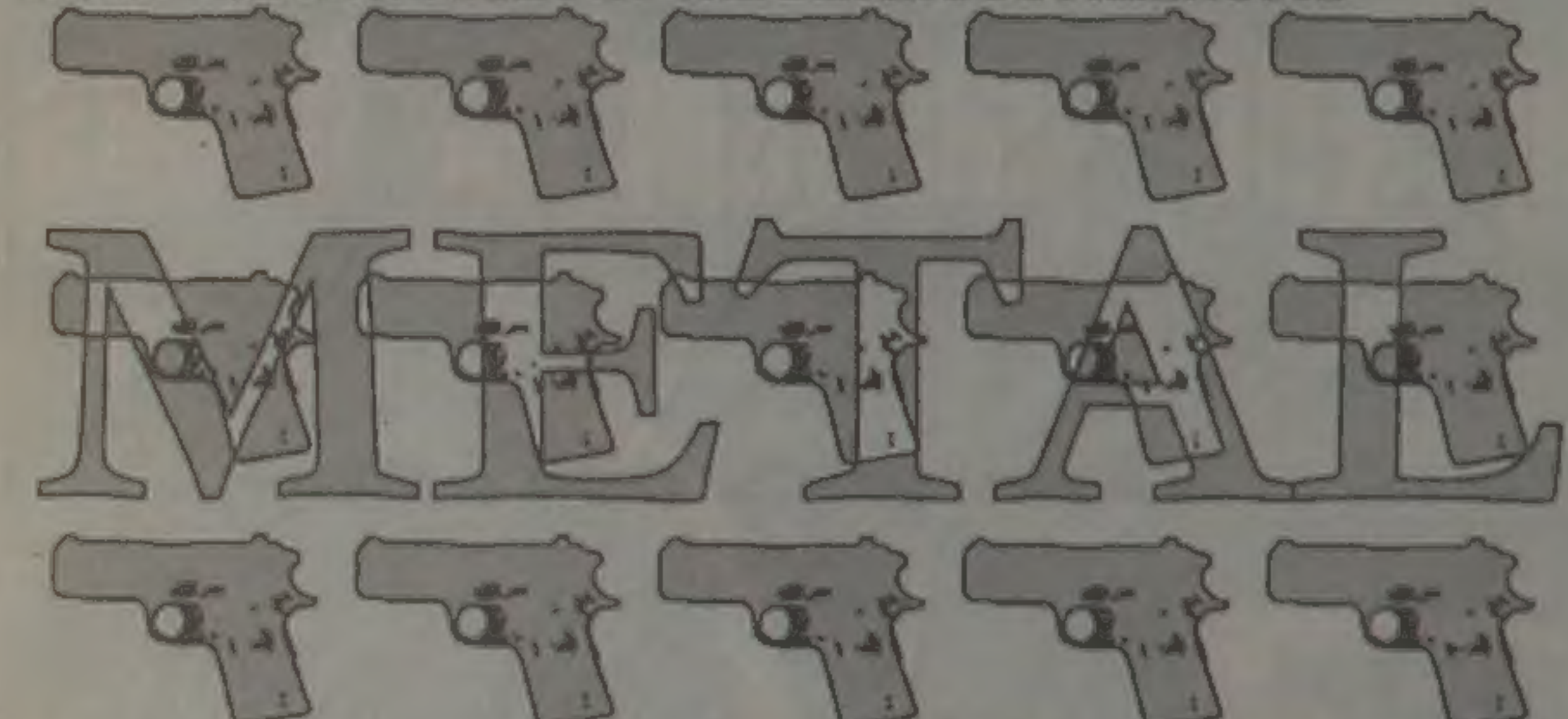
Methinks the lady doth protest too much. ☐

The Fiery Cross

By Diana Gabaldon • Doubleday
Canada • 979 pp. • \$39.95



EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT AT THE BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE



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Sebastian Junger puts out a Fire

fect Storm
 orte ventures into
 es most readers
 didn't dare

ARRY HAMMOND

re, the first book from Sebastian Junger since the enormously successful *The Perfect Storm*, is, like its predecessor, a single story rather a collection of journalistic

2 and 2001. The title reflects the that the first two articles deal the men and organizations who wildfires in the northwestern ed States, while the other eight— range from the saga of the last le harpooner in the Caribbean to ys on wartorn areas like Sierra e, Cyprus, Kashmir, Kosovo and anistan—deal with people or tries which are under fire. Another thread running through book is a fascination with danger the adrenaline rush of action n many people, including jour- sts, are obsessed with. Junger

himself admits an addiction to risk- ing his life, both in the introduc- tion—where he talks about seeing a magazine photograph of forest fire- fighters taking a break while behind them rose a wall of flame 300 feet high, and how he tacked it to his wall for an entire winter, wanting to share something of their awe, their exhaus- tion and sense of purpose in his own life—and the article "Colter's Way," in which he discusses a fur trapper who constantly puts himself into Indian territory and com- pares it to the way modern extreme sport enthusiasts take to rock climbing without safety ropes and the like.

The Junger artist

As a young man, Junger took a job as a tree climber for a forestry company, hoping it might lead toward the more glamorous job of wildfire fighter. He credits a near-maiming injury—one he knew very well would eventually befall him—as well as common sense and an urge toward self-preservation with divert- ing him into writing. Yet even in *Fire's* final article, on the war in

Afghanistan, he goes to the front- lines to get a glimpse of the conflict first-hand. He admits there isn't real- ly much information of journalistic value there, but he goes anyway. When he and his photographer are pinned down by shelling, waiting for each round to fall, he writes, "There was nothing exciting about it, noth- ing even abstractly interesting. It was purely, exclusively bad.... No matter how small the odds were, the idea that I could go straight from life into nonexistence was almost unbearable; it turned each 10-second wait into a bizarre exercise in existentialism. Bravery—the usual alternative to fear—also held no appeal, because bravery could get you killed."

Yet there he was. He makes no claim of heroism. In fact, he states quite plainly in "Colter's Way" that heroism is only present in bravery if the action is necessary for society. Books like this are undoubtedly unnecessary too; however they do give us greater insight into places and events than we would be able to obtain for ourselves. That is their purpose and their value. The trick for the writer is to steer a course somewhere between authenticity and needless risk. If the writer dies

while trying to get the story, he obviously can't write it. Junger appreciates that bal- ance—he's attracted to danger but tries to avoid it if he can. It's seductive, though. A per- son who has a narrow escape feels more alive; he thinks to himself, "I've just come back from some other place these people don't know exists." These people, of course, are the safe people of the modern world—the ones, like me (and, hopefully, you), who read books like *Fire*, *The Perfect Storm* and *Into Thin Air* while sitting comfortably in our houses, letting writers like Junger go out and get the story for us to enjoy. This probably also tells us some- thing about human beings and our enjoyment of vicarious thrills.

Overall, *Fire* is an interesting book. Junger writes with a clear, compact style that conveys the nature of events without getting bogged down in over-description or telegraphing and belabouring the emotions he wants the reader to feel. He presents the facts as they are in effective juxtaposition and lets



the reader figure out their own reac- tions to his stories. *Fire*, being sever- al smaller stories instead of one large one, probably won't be as popu- lar as his previous book, but the writing is just as good and the sub- jects are certainly as riveting. ☐

Fire

By Sebastian Junger • W.W. Norton & Company • 224 pp. • \$35.99



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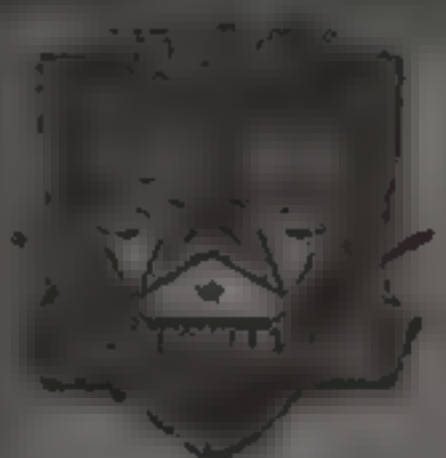
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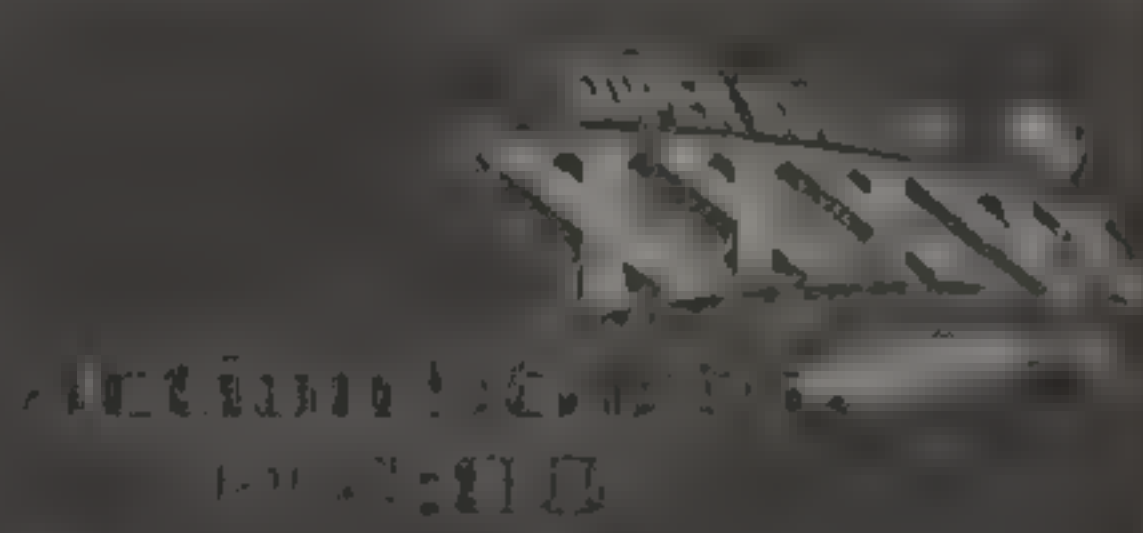
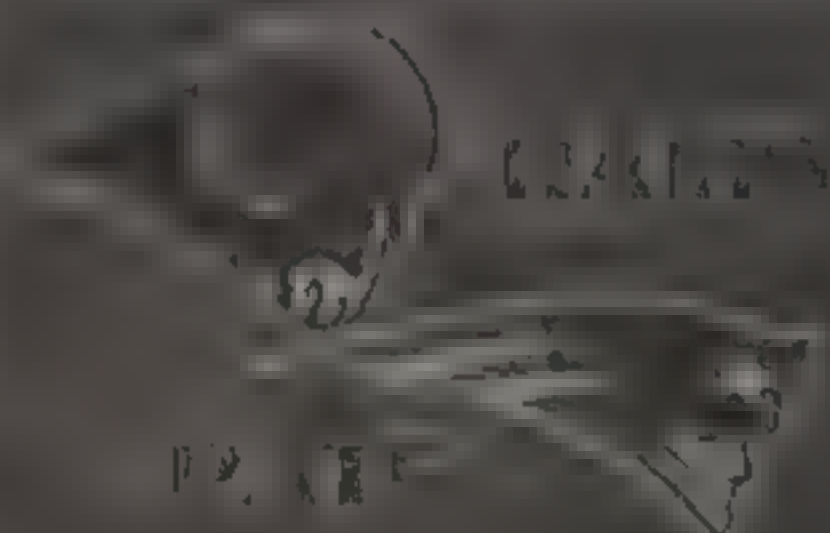


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IN THE BOX

The Elephant and Castle on Whyte's

By DAVID DICENZO
AND JOHN TURNER

This week, Vue press box fixtures John and Dave pray to the hockey gods and thank them for a couple of solid Oiler performances. Long time coming, fellas. Then again, there was a full moon on the night Edmonton tied Detroit. But a win over the much-hated/much-loved Maple Leafs and a good draw with the NHL-best Red Wings are reasons to party—even if the post-game pyro stuff is on the fritz.

John: I had a discussion last week with a guy in my class about the Oil's slump and he said that with games against Colorado, Toronto and Detroit on tap, he couldn't see them coming out of it any time soon. And after their loss to Colorado, I was even less optimistic.

Dave: Dude, after the first few minutes of the Avs game, I figured Edmonton was in for a bigger collapse than friggin' Enron.

John: I guess all of us were a bit surprised Saturday night, including the guys in charge of the pyrotechnics at Skyreach. After the win, I sort of flinched and braced myself (as I often

did in the distant past) for the fireworks display, but they sputtered a couple of times before they went off. I guess they were getting old, 'cause it had been so long since Edmonton last won a game.

Dave: That's hilarious. I know exactly what you mean. Normally those things make me pee my pants, but for some strange reason I was ready too. I guess it had been so long since they got a big win—sorry, Anaheim and Montreal don't count—that I thought, "Hey, let's celebrate." The fireworks sputtered like an Oil power play.

John: Even though the Oil gave up a lot of chances to the Leafs, they did play a better game overall and scored some goals when they had the chance. Salo made a number of huge saves to keep Edmonton in the game and I guess that's why he was the second star. By the way, the power play even chipped in with a goal, Dave.

Dave: Okay, okay. And they also got one against the Red Wings. Could be a turnaround, eh, guy? And it's a relief to see Tommy resemble his old self because he was looking like Tommy Soderstrom for a while there.

John: I'll be honest, Dave: the win

against Toronto didn't really boost optimism that much. I was still a bit worried about the Detroit old-timers on Monday night. But the Oil jumped all over them in the first period, amassing 19 shots on Hasek. With a little bit of luck, it could have been 30 Edmonton after one, but Hasek certainly earned the first star that night.

Dave: Yeah, Dom was freakish. After the game, Anson Carter was talking about how people perceive Hasek as lucky, but when he does that shit for years you gotta assume it's not all luck. And hey—it sounds stupid, but that first period could go a long way even if the Dominator kept it tight. That was the first time I saw real heart from everybody in a while. And most importantly, they stuck it out and kept up the effort. With three points against two tough teams in two games, the Oil have something to build on. Whoa—hockey cliché alert.

John: The Oil are still making a few mistakes here and there but they're not costing them games anymore.

Dave: Let's not get ahead of ourselves, Johnny.

John: The last win and this tie should go a long way to boosting this team's confidence, and hopefully they can put together a bit of a winning streak before the Olympic break.

Dave: I figure that good, consistent play is crucial but you can't underestimate the importance of getting that chemistry back. These guys woulda took a bullet for each other a while ago but the slump led to finger-pointing by the coaches and especially the media. I think the five-game road trip will give them a chance to bond again. And as far as chemistry goes, a few wins can do a helluva lot in that department. ☺

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John said "Ha!"

Nguyen's T-shirt designs are anything but laughable

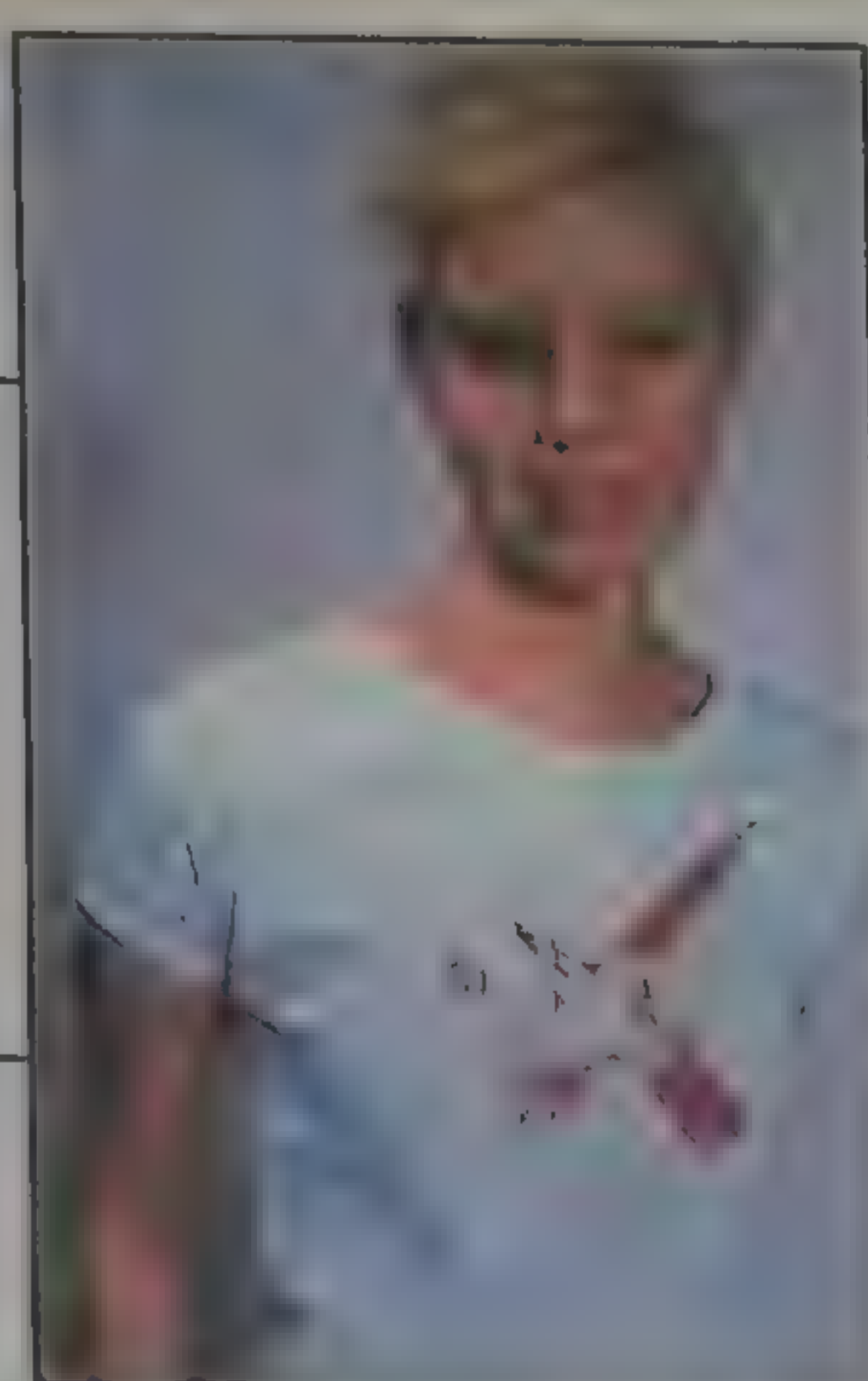
BY JULIANN WILDING

Easily recognizable logos or cute, accessible, simply-drawn characters emblazon most of the screen T-shirts you'll see both in stores and on your friends and passers-by. These logos and symbols are, almost always, placed in a panel across the middle of the chest. After a while, all this repetition becomes quite a snooze. Often the image itself hardly registers; it's just another screen-T. We've all purchased or at least responded to such screen-Ts before—who doesn't recognize the blatant, glaring Ecko rhinoceros, the stylized but overplayed creatures of Paul Frank (particularly the monkey!) or, even more obviously, the Nike swoosh? T-shirts have become such a standard element of every style of dressing, but finding a line that does something subtle and interesting is a rare treat.

Local Edmonton artist John Nguyen is providing just that sort of treat with his recently launched T-shirt line "ha apparel." The drawings he's had silk-screened onto fitted T-shirts are intricate, clever and complex. What at first appears to be cute anime characters is actually a scene depicting tensions between different subcultures; a kitschy comic drawing actually reveals itself to be half of a two-part story when you turn the T-shirt over and look at the back. My personal favourite of Nguyen's designs is one that is yet to appear on a T-shirt: a scene divided into squares, each square portraying one stage in the spreading of a rumour, all of them leading back to the centre square.

Self-mode man

"I've been drawing pretty much non-stop since kindergarten," the twenty-something artist explains, "but I did stop for a couple of years. I was getting into some pretty rough shit for a while, but then I decided to turn my life around, and I got right back to drawing." Nguyen is soft-spoken and a little shy, but there's an edge to him that tells you straight up that this is no naive cartoonist; perhaps



his years of bad behaviour are exactly what influence his gritty, somewhat dark portrayals of street culture.

"I just draw," he says. "If something pops into my imagination, I draw it. If I think of some idea, I draw it. I guess you could say listening to drum 'n' bass gets me in the right creative mode to draw, but I don't draw things that I've necessarily seen—just what comes into my head." His work for ha apparel borrows elements from janimation and comic strips as well as influences from underground music cultures such as hip-hop, drum 'n' bass, electronica and trance.

The standout quality of the bulk of Nguyen's drawings (besides the rough, street-smart attitude) is his attention to minute detail. Precision, clean lines and a particular decisiveness for shape and angle give Nguyen's work a very clear voice—one that's saying something subtle and interesting. Nguyen typically draws for six to eight hours a day, using pen and ink on paper. "My work has meaning," he says, "because I do it with my own hands, you know? A lot of people tell me, 'You should move into computers, you know? You get graphics done more quickly that way.' I can't really explain how I feel about that, but I don't want to just move shapes around. I want my art to come through my hands. Hand-drawn screens are in a whole separate category than computer work."

The placement of some of his images is also what excited me about Nguyen's T-shirts. Each shirt has an image on the front as well as the back, and while some of them are in the centre, there are also a few that appeared on the side, running vertically from top to bottom rather than side to side.

Hardcore logo

Presently, Nguyen's designs are available exclusively at Foosh Audio and Apparel, and though he's only doing screen-Ts right now, he wants to move into cut-and-sew designs as well. "I have to learn how to sew first!" he laughs. "And figure out how to cut patterns and stuff." By taking a close look at the shapes and details of the clothes worn by the characters in his drawings, I would say designing both guys' and girls'

clothing is definitely something Nguyen ought to pursue. The logo he designed for his line is also unique, with its geometric, near-symmetrical, eye-catching shapes—but one that's exquisitely simple at the same time. "I want everyone to

relate to 'ha,'" he says. "Ha, to me, is like having the last laugh, liking telling everyone who didn't think I could do this that I'm doing something with my life—to have the last laugh back in their face, you know? I want people to get that and relate to

it, and, in a way, live it as a motto. 'Ha' is just a fast way to put it." ☐

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Comfortably numb

Not even a root canal keeps our food critic from his duties

By DAVID DICENZO

I had a dilemma recently. Well, two, if you count the fact that the Oilers blew another road game. It was Monday night and I needed to find a place to eat. Quick-y. Tuesday afternoon was to include a lovely trip to the dentist, a root canal being the featured event on the slate. My friends then suggested that I do a food column on what you can eat after having a root canal.

See what happens when you rely on beer-drinking hockey fans?

Actually, it was a pretty good idea, so I started to scribble down potential items I could eat after the procedure. "Jell-O," someone suggests. "Liquor," says another. "Jell-O shots," screams a third. Creative punch, eh? One friend confirmed his lunacy by chiming in with "dry ribs," while Martin suggested Boost—you know, that meal supplement stuff. But then he adds, "It's better to die than drink Boost for a week," so I decide to pass on that idea. I add pudding to the list (in fact, when I own a restaurant someday, there will definitely be pudding on the menu) and one friend tells

me that I can get some at Zodiac down on 63 Ave. That's perfect.

I have the work done in the afternoon (it was considerably less painful than I thought, if you don't count the tab when you don't have dental coverage) and I drive straight out to Zodiac. Dr. Baergen told me to wait until the freezing was done before I ate, but hey, if I had listened to dentists in the first place, I

dining

wouldn't have needed a root canal. So I grab a seat at the diner-style Canadian/Chinese restaurant and start out with one of my friends' better suggestions—liquor. The waitress brings over a beer and we have a bonding moment when I explain to her where I just was. She tells me she hates going to the dentist and I totally understand—though in all fairness, Dr. Baergen is much better than the butcher back in Hamilton who scarred me emotionally for years.

Drop intentions

My beer is going down just fine. I do feel like I'm drooling all over the place and I have to be really sure my barley app doesn't spill out the sides of my mouth. But now comes the real test. Courageously, I order the pork chops (because pudding is included in the price of the entrée). This worried me initially, but I knew the gravy on top would soften the chops up. The vegetables were mercifully mushy and I

went with steamed rice instead of French fries (healthier and less invasive). Oh, I had some beef noodle soup, too. But none of these things really hurt the tooth. Heat, cold—it all felt the same on the left side of my mouth, though there was a party going on over to the right.

Of course, best of all was the pudding. Sure, my heart skipped a beat when the waitress told me there was no chocolate, but it wasn't a huge deal. The vanilla was just fine. It was the weirdest thing—the pudding had been in the refrigerator and it was super-cold. Like I said before, I could only feel and taste on the right side of my mouth, so as I slugged back the creamy dessert it felt like there was a cool, refreshing thing happening in one area of my mouth, while the other side was oblivious to it all.

Later that night, things got a little hairy as the freezing wore off. I managed to down a slice of cold pizza, a tomato salad I made (with onions, feta cheese and kalamata olives) and a couple spoonfuls of Nutella, but it was starting to hurt.

I was impressed with my pain tolerance. It didn't exactly equate to playing Game Seven for the Cup on a broken leg, but hey, cut me some slack. Have someone dig out holes in your tooth for two hours, then dish out a big, unexpected chunk of change for it, and see how you like it. ☺

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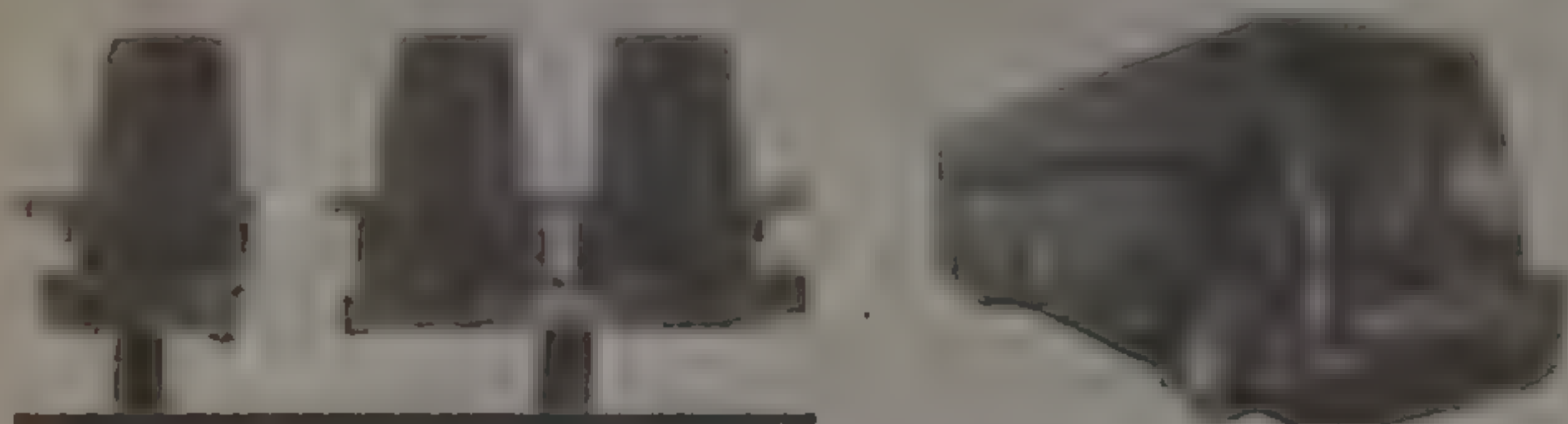
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DISHWEEKLY

Continued from previous page

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Double Greeting Wonton House (10212-96 St., 424-2486) The rock 'n' rollers choice. Try a spicy long donut with rice roll or a curried chicken platter, washed down with a fine sago concoction. Smoking. \$

Genghis Grill (10080 Jasper Ave., 424-6197) "A Mongolian food experience." Soon opening dinner café. \$

Man's Café (12520-118 Ave., 452-3672) A super stop for a variety of tasty treats. Make sure to try the Oriental stirfry. Smoking. \$\$

Marco Polo (#206, 9700-105 Ave., 428-3388) The classiest Chinese restaurant in Edmonton. Smoking. \$\$

Noodle Noodle (10008-106 Ave., 422-6862) The best dim sum in Edmonton. Non-smoking. \$\$

Shangri-La Restaurant (14927-111 Ave., 487-6868) Authentic Chinese and Thai cuisine. Rice and noodle dishes, meat entrées, appetizers, desserts. \$\$

Xian Szechuan (10080 - 178 St., 484-8883) Delicious selection of authentic Szechuan dishes. Non-smoking. \$\$

CONTINENTAL

Cilantro's on 111th (10322-111 St., 424-6182) Wide selection of dishes from kiwi mussels to blackened catfish or mini rack of lamb. \$\$

David's (8407 Argyll Rd., 468-1167) Specializing in Alberta beef dishes on the south of the town. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

Franklin's Inn Dining Room (2016 Sherwood Dr., Sherwood Park 467-1234) All-day breakfast and a great selection of all your favourites. \$-\$\$

The Grinder (10957-124 St., 453-1709) 20 years old but under new management. Also lounge and games room. Smoking in the lounge. \$-\$\$.

Mayfield Grill (1665-109 Ave., 930-4062) Casual dining in an elegant atmosphere, extensive menu for lunch and dinner, best Sunday brunch. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

Richie Mill Bar and Grill (10171 Saskatchewan Dr., 431-1717) Century old fieldstone walls create a cozy atmosphere in which to enjoy a variety of dishes or relax during happy hour 4-6 p.m. Smoking. \$\$-\$\$\$

Sidetrack Café (10333-112 St., 421-1326) Whether you like succulent steak, decadent eggs Benedict in the morning or late night chicken wings, the Sidetrack Café kitchen will do it for you. Smoking in the lounge. \$-\$\$

Teak Room (16615-109 Ave., 484-0821) Enjoy a fine dining experience with gourmet dishes prepared by our award-winning chefs. Non-smoking. \$\$\$

Turtle Creek Café (8404-109 St., 433-

4202) Continental-style bistro with good variety of dishes and pizza, stirfries, pasta and more. Non-smoking. \$\$

EAST INDIAN

Asian Hut Restaurant (4620-99 St., 430-8267) Try the best East India has to offer. \$-\$\$

Jewel of Kashmir (7219-104 St., 438-4646) Discover a place that's out of this world. Designed to capture the excitement and glamour of India.

Khazana (10177-107 St., 702-0330) Authentic Tandoori cuisine in one of Edmonton's most elegant dining rooms. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

New Asian Village (10143 Saskatchewan Dr., 433-3804) Cooking at its best from the subcontinent with a great panoramic river valley view. Smoking. No minors. \$

Spicey House (9777-102 A Ave., Canada Place (Food Court), 425-0193) Veg and non-veg curries with choice herbs, the secret to the intoxicating flavour of Indian cuisine. \$

EUROPEAN

Continental Treat (10560-82 Ave., 433-7432) Enjoy excellent European cuisine in an elegant yet comfortable atmosphere. Non-smoking. \$\$

Madison's Grill (Union Bank Inn, 10053 Jasper Ave., 423-3600) Unique historical building; upscale regional cuisine with a European influence. Non-smoking. \$\$\$

Restaurant Moskow (104, 14315-118 Ave., 455-7677) Try Russian dishes like borscht and meat dumplings in the warm atmosphere and listen to Russian music. Non-smoking. Lunch \$. Dinner \$\$.

The Russian Tea Room (10312 Jasper Ave., 426-0000) Romantic, quiet restaurant in the heart of downtown. Best cheesecake in town. European and Ukrainian cuisine. Palm readings daily. Non-smoking. \$\$-\$\$\$

FRENCH CUISINE

La Boheme (6427-112 Ave., 474-5693) A rare establishment where the alchemy of the surroundings, food, drink and service combine to create something approaching the art of living well. \$\$\$

Café Amandine (8523-91 St., 465-1919) Fine French cuisine. Entertainment on Friday and Saturday. Non-smoking. \$

The Crêperie (10220-103 St., 420-6656) Award-winning Edmonton institution without haute price. Non-smoking. \$

Three Musketeers (10416-82 Ave., 437-4239) Come and try our traditional French cuisine at an affordable price in a unique setting. Patio now open. Non-smoking. \$\$

Normand's (11639A Jasper Ave., 482-2600) Whether you're craving a wild mushroom soup or have an appetite for wild game, we can fill your needs. It's a country-French fare with an Alberta accent. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

GREEK

Grub Med Ristorante (17 Fairway Dr., 117 St. & 37 Ave.) Edmonton's finest Greek restaurant. Open for dinner at 5 p.m. \$-\$\$\$

It's All Greek to Me (10127-100A St., near Howard Way, 425-2073) Delicious spanakopita with fine Greek wines. Beautiful Greek atmosphere. Smoking. \$\$

Koutouki Taverna (10704-124 St., near to Roxy Theatre, 452-5383) The most authentic Greek food in Edmonton, prepared by the original Yianni himself. Smoking. \$\$

Symposium on Whyte (10439-82 Ave., 2nd Floor, 433-7912) Innovative Greek cuisine in a beautiful open setting overlooking Whyte Ave. Non-smoking. \$-\$\$

Sytaki Greek Island Restaurant (16313-111 Ave., 484-2473) Visit the Greek islands in Edmonton. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

Yiannis Taverna Restaurant (10444-82 Ave., 433-6768) Authentic Greek food belly dancing, and the friendly staff create a fun and boisterous atmosphere. Non-smoking. \$\$

IRISH PUB

Celli's (10338-109 St., 426-5555) A great variety of pub food and drinks. Smoking \$-\$\$

The Druid (11606 Jasper Ave., 454-9928) The best pub food, drinks and industry night in Edmonton. Features authentic Irish entrées and daily lunch specials. Smoking. \$-\$\$

O'Byrne's Irish Pub (10616-Whyte Ave., 414-6766) We serve a variety of pub food all hand-made with care and pride. From our homemade fish 'n' chips to our near-famous Irish breakfast. Our menu changes daily, so please come in and indulge in the experience. Smoking. \$-\$\$

Scruffy Murphy's Irish Pub (Whitemud Crossing, 4211-106 St., 485-1717) Traditional Irish fare plus pub favourites. Half-price appetizers during happy hour. Smoking. \$-\$\$

ITALIAN

Bruno's Italian Restaurant (9914-89 Ave., 433-8161) Quiet, one of Edmonton's best-kept secrets. Smoking. \$\$

Chianti (10501-82 Ave., 439-8729) Boticelli paintings serve as a nice backdrop in establishment offering the best pasta selections in town. \$\$

Flore Cantina Italiana (8715-109 St., 439-8466) Good, affordable, restaurant on campus. Non-smoking. \$

Frank's Place-Pacific Fish (10020-101 Ave., 422-0282) Situated half a block from Churchill Square and summer festival fun. An extensive Italian and seafood menu and friendly efficient service ensure a return visit. Smoking. \$-\$\$\$

Giovanni's Restaurant (10130-107 St., 426-2021) Delicious cuisine for a song, featuring Giovanni himself when he breaks into a heart-stopping aria. \$\$

Italian Kitchen Restaurant (69 Ave., 178 St., Callingwood Mall, 489-5619) Relaxing Italian dining. From pastas such as fettuccine Alfredo to dishes such as steak Diane. Non-smoking. \$\$

Italix Ristorante Italiano (512 St. Albert Trail, St. Albert, 459-8090) Delicious homemade Italian food \$\$

The Old Spaghetti Factory (10220-10 St., 422-6088) Heaping plates of spaghetti served with our patented thick, tasty sauce. Non-smoking. \$\$

Pappa's (4702-118 Ave., 471-5749) A fine Italian family restaurant. Non-smoking. \$\$

Il Portico (10012-107 St., 424-0707) Trendy downtown restaurant with fresh imaginative dishes. Non-smoking. \$\$\$

Sorrentino's (10844-95 St., 425-0961) In the heart of Little Italy, serves delicious authentic Italian fare. Non-smoking. \$\$

Sorrentino's Whyte Avenue (10612-82 Ave., Varscona Hotel, 474-9860) Authentic Italian cooking. Tantalizing appetizers, pizza, calzones, pasta, sandwiches and entrées. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

That's Aroma (11010-101 St., 425-7333) The garlic specialists, offering fine Italian cuisine. \$\$

Tin Pan Alley Pasta House & Winery (4804 Calgary Trail South, 702-2060) Pasta by day, party by night! Edmonton's hottest new restaurant for delicious and affordable pasta. Smoking in the lounge. \$\$

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DISHWEEKLY

Continued from previous page

any Roma's (11730 Jasper Ave., 488-71) Great barbecue chicken and ribs with a lot of food on your plate. Non-smoking. \$

Senari's on 1st (10117-101 St., 425-151) Enjoy eclectic Italian food in an intimate atmosphere. Dinner or drinks, featuring live jazz every weekend. Wheelchair accessible. Non-smoking. \$

JAPANESE

Murasato (10012-82 Ave., 439-1335) Cozy restaurant featuring a choice selection of meals from the Land of the Rising Sun. Non-smoking. \$

Crab-a-Bite (10351 Whyte Ave., 433-336) The perfect spot for either a quick bite or an evening of dining. A varied selection of Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese dishes. Non-smoking. \$

Mikado (10350-109 St., 425-8096) The only Japanese restaurant in Edmonton. A good reason. Non-smoking. \$

Magano Japanese Cuisine (10080-178 St., 487-8900) Authentic Japanese food. Extensive menu choices from sushi to pan-fried dumplings and teriyaki beef or chicken. Open for lunch and dinner. \$

LATIN

Paraiso Latin Canadian Club (10816-95 St., 425-5338) Great Latino food! Great Latino music! Open Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m., Sunday at 3 p.m.. Free tango lessons on Thursdays. \$

LEBANESE

Parkellen Restaurant (7018-109 St., 436-080) Multiple-award winning restaurant and bar. Authentic Lebanese cuisine offered in an elegant atmosphere. Large extensive wine list with rare Lebanese and French classics. Reservations recommended. \$-\$\$\$

MEDITERRANEAN

Valentino's Restaurant (Bourbon Street, West Edmonton Mall, 444-3344) Valentino's offers great food. Steaks, gourmet pizzas and pasta, with a touch of Mediterranean cuisine. Smoking and non-smoking. \$-\$\$\$

MEXICAN

Ello's Barrio (10450-82 Ave., 431-0774) Party dishes in a trendy neighbourhood, perfect for your next fiesta. Non-smoking. \$

COUNTRY SHOP

Main Patisserie (9925-82 Ave., 988-1512) Quality French breads and pastries. Also serving sandwiches, quiches and specialty coffee. Non-smoking. \$

PIZZA

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Rock Lounge & Sports Bar (Franklin's, 2016 Sherwood Dr., Sherwood Park, 463-1234) "More than worth the trip." Unbelievable daily specials to complement our full menu! \$-\$\$

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Golden Pizza (8708-109 St., 433-5205) Famous pizza since 1970. Made with fresh ingredients. For entertainment we offer live music. We also offer a variety of drinks. Non-smoking. \$

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Martini's Bar & Grill (9910-109 St., 424-7219) Enjoy our 25+ custom martinis, 15+ single-malt Scotch collection, evening steak sandwich specials and selection of craft beers all in an environment conducive to relaxation! Non-smoking restaurant. \$-\$\$

Nathan's Pub & Grill (8930 Jasper Ave., 421-4446) Great food, large servings and value for your money. Smoking. \$

Nicholby's (11066-156 St., 448-2255) Great, eclectic pub fare. Sandwiches, wings, appetizers. \$

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Red Fox Pub (7230 Argyll Road, 465-7931) Our comfortable pub offers darts, pool tables coupled with a cozy fireplace in a relaxing setting. Sunday we offer happy hour all day, plus free pool. Non-smoking restaurant, smoking in the pub. \$

The Sherlock Holmes Pubs (10012-101A Ave., 8770-170 St., 10341-82 Ave., 5004-98 Ave.) For a taste of the good old times, come on in and try our British and continental menu. Recently revised with nearly 20 new dishes, we'll have something to tempt your tastebuds! Daily specials also offered. \$-\$\$

The Windsor Bar & Grill (11702-87 Ave., 433-7800) We are open for lunch and dinner and fun all the time. Pizza is our specialty. Prices and fun can't be beat! Smoking. \$

Yabbo's Boneyard/ The Library (11113-87 Ave., 439-4981) Our specialty is Saturday and Sunday brunch. We're open for lunch, dinner and after work, to unwind and have fun. Smoking. \$

SEAFOOD

Lighthouse Café (7331-104 St., 433-0091; 5506 Tudor Glen Mkt, 460-2222) Our chefs prepare the freshest seafood in town. Lunch and dinner seven days a week. Patio, licensed. \$

Thomas' Fishermen's Grotto (9624-76 Ave., 433-3905) Fine dining fish and seafood, featuring the seafood lover's feast for two. Brunch, lunch and dinner. Non-smoking. \$\$\$

SPANISH

La Tapa Restaurant & Tapa Bar (10523-99 Ave., 424-8272) The only Tapa bar in Edmonton! Delicious cuisine from Spain in a casual atmosphere. Specializing in paella and sangria, 24 tapas available. Great menu. The only place to go for a taste of Spain. Smoking in the basement lounge. \$

STEAK AND SEAFOOD

Mirabelle's (9929-109 St., 429-3055) One block north of the Legislative Building, this contemporary restaurant specializes in Alberta beef and seafood. Other choices include pasta dishes, lamb, buffalo, veal and fresh fish. The wine list offers a fine selection of wines by the glass or bottle. \$\$\$

Von's Steak and Fish House (10309-81 Ave., 439-0041) Alberta beef at its best and great seafood too. Smoking. \$\$\$

STEAKHOUSE

Hy's (10013-101A Ave., 424-4444) Great steaks in a great atmosphere. Non-smoking. \$-\$\$\$

Yeoman's (10030-107 St., 423-1511) The Beefeater's steakhouse. Smoking in the lounge. \$-\$\$\$

THAI

BanThai (15726-100 Ave., 444-9345) Awarded certificate of authenticity by the Royal Thai Government with an atmosphere to match. Non-smoking. \$

Bua Thai Restaurant (10049-113 St., 482-2277) Thailand's distinct authentic cuisine of the new stylish restaurant in downtown Edmonton. \$\$\$

The King and I (8208-107 St., 433-2222) The King is back! Amazing selection of dishes—spicy and flavourful. Good enough for the Rolling Stones. Non-smoking. \$\$\$

Krua Wilai Thai Restaurant (Sterling Pl., 9940-106 St., 424-8303) Our cooks from Bangkok offer you the best and most authentic Thai food in Edmonton. Vegetarian menu available. Smoking. \$

UKRAINIAN

Pyrogy House (12510-118 St., 454-7880) Pyrogies and cabbage rolls just like Baba used to make. Non-smoking. \$

VEGETARIAN

Max's Light Cuisine (7809-109 St., 432-6241) Great vegetarian dishes including delicious vegan entrees and desserts. \$

VIETNAMESE

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Figuring out a ski trip? Use your Okanagan

Big White/Silver Star may be the Cadillac of ski resorts

By COLIN CATHREA

Want to ski for a few days in the Okanagan Valley? The only thing standing in your way is the cost and the 2,000 kilometres that lie between there and here. So you have a decision to make between a long drive that will cost you a few hundred bucks and a couple of frayed nerves, and a flight on a discount airline that will get you there in about three hours (with a stop in Calgary). The Westjet fare to the Okanagan is \$1,858 for two adults and one child—but remember that this price includes lifts. (You should also be aware that the departure date must be Tuesday or Wednesday; weekends are more expensive.) The most inexpensive accommodations I

found at Central Reservations for three humble mortals at Big White were \$535. So let's total things up: that's \$2,400 for three people to ski for four days! If you're planning on eating, your meals will increase that sum—but who needs nourishment when you're having so much fun? [Hey—that almost rhymes! —Ed.]

Big White has always lived up to its name, and this area just keeps getting bigger, if not whiter. They are now the proud owners of Silver Star Resort just down the valley above



Vernon. It's not a done deal, but the official announcement is expected very soon. I've always called Silver Star the most family-friendly resort anywhere, and that opinion was only strengthened after the area manager recently took me on a tour to show

Silver Star takes home the gold

With over 3,000 skiable acres and a "customer first" philosophy, Silver Star enjoys the highest visitor-return rate of any mountain in North America. They also have plenty of other accolades to boast about: they were named one of the world's top three ski areas

(*Canadian* magazine), Mountain Resort of the Year for 1999 (B.C. Alpine Ski Association) and one of the top three resorts for cross-country skiing in North America (*Snow Country* magazine), besides winning six Ski Canada awards, including Best Weather, Best Family Skiing and Best Village Base.

For the snowboarders and fringe skiers out there, Silver Star has an awesome terrain park as well, full of spines, quarter-pipes, tabletops and jibs combined with two terrifying

me the many improvements it's undergone, including an expansion to the entire backside of the mountain. It's large and fun, but I find the front side is better for staying with friends and having a great skiing/boarding day. The resort itself looks like Aspen 50 years ago, except the buildings are new, while the village remains an incredible place to take the family or a group of friends, as you can rent any number of condos or stay in the main street area.



BY HART GOLBECK

White blanket

All the resorts in the Rockies received huge snowfalls over the weekend. Resort operators were ecstatic from the southern slopes of Castle Mountain and Fernie up to Marmot Basin as great ski conditions went up another notch. Fernie alone got 72 centimetres in a couple of days, forcing the closure of two chairs for avalanche control. With record attendance at many slopes, this is shaping up to be an awesome year.

Taxi driver

Kimberley and Fernie have come up with a deal aimed at those of you who are short on time but big on bucks: helicopter rides between the two resorts so that you can ski both of them in one day. The heli-taxi can pick you up and drop you off at the Calgary and Cranbrook airports as well. Rates start as low as \$70, but I was afraid to ask

half-pipes. You can ski or board at night until 9 p.m. Putnam Creek is also a prime haven for snowboarders, stuffed with steep, fluffy, fun and sometimes ominous-looking runs. Catch this terrain on a powder day and you'll never want to leave. But if you *do* make your exit, be sure you head down the valley to Big White.

Pappy together

Big White is the "grandpappy" of the Okanagan. It is a big mountain—not abrupt and ominous like the Rockies, but big, fat and bold, populated with its famous "snow ghosts," small pine

what they went up to. If you're braver than I am, call (250) 427-4881 or e-mail info@skikimberley.com.

April fuel

Whistler is hosting another festival this spring: the WSSF 2002 will take place from April 12 to 21. That's 10 days of excitement, including Big Air, Freeride, concerts and the Vert Zone. A pro photographer search will be part of the action as well, for any of you good with a camera.

Crème de la Cram

Ron Cram is on a streak and he's not about to stop. In 1992 the Colorado skier decided since he loved skiing so much he was going to ski every week of the year. He did this for 91 weeks straight until August of 1994, when he hiked up to one of favourite chutes and the snow was gone. So was the record—but he did find some snow later that month, so at least he was able to keep a monthly ski record alive. Cram is still going strong, having just notched his 112th month running. The tireless skier has occasionally been forced to take the odd helicopter ride to keep the streak going but he says he much prefers the cheaper mid-summer hikes looking for some remnants of snow on which he can get in his turns. ☺

trees that are completely covered with snow. The best thing about it, however, is the consistency of its snow; very rarely does it suffer a marginal year. There are a huge number of rooms available, and even at regular rates they are now fully booked until mid-March. Why? It's a great resort, that's why. Put in a little groundwork though, and you can find excellent accommodations if you're willing to sacrifice a little privacy: there are two hostels at Big White, and one at Silver Star. \$15 gets you a room with seven others; spend \$25 and you only have to put up with two. Now go shred some new verts. ☺

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Chutes and Bowls

BY HART GOLBECK

Panhandle your way to the slopes

Canadian skiers and boarders looking for a little American flair have always flocked to Schweitzer Mountain. It's located in the panhandle of Idaho, just 15 kilometres up the hill from the border. The easiest way to get there is to head for Cranbrook, B.C. and go south on Highway 95 through the Kingsgate border crossing.

Schweitzer has an average annual snowfall of 750 centimetres and there's no sign of that total taking a dip this season as steady dumps have laid down a base in excess of 250 centimetres already. One high-speed quad, four double chairs, two handle

tows and a high-speed six-pack nicknamed "Stella" service 59 runs on 2,500 skiable acres of terrain. Stella, the only six-person chair within driving distance from Edmonton, can really move snow enthusiasts up the slope in a hurry. With a ride time of five and a half minutes, it can transport up to 2,000 skiers per hour 1.6 kilometres up the slope.

For boarders and free-skiers, Schweitzer offers a unique terrain park with its own lift, lights, music and food outlet. There are five jumps with a variety of take-offs, four rails and a log slide course consisting of nine different logs in a row.

The mountain terrain is incredible as well, with massive bowls, great glades and a whole slew of groomed cruiser runs. Schweitzer prides itself

on its family-friendly reputation and offers many programs catering to the younger crowd. Three- to six-year-olds can hang out in an all-day Kinder Kamp and for the six- to eleven-year-olds there's Mogul Mice ski camps.

If you'd like your trip to Schweitzer to coincide with an event, mark the March 1-3 weekend on your calendar. The fun begins with "Chicks on Sticks," an all-inclusive one-day camp for ladies of all skiing and boarding skill levels. It includes an entire day of instruction, food and fun. Meanwhile, an outrageous air competition will be taking place both Friday and Saturday.

Sel high

The choice place to stay on the hill is the Selkirk Lodge. There are many other places farther down the mountain, but for first tracks of the day, the Selkirk Lodge is definitely the place to stay. It's got underground parking as well as hot tubs, a heated outdoor pool and a cozy fireplace to relax by. For food, there's the Chimney Rock Grill,

with its micro brew, wide expanse of dishes and many daily specials like free nachos and huge litre margaritas. Taps Bar, above the daylodge, serves 24 types of brew and offers live music too.

Just a little northwest of Schweitzer (about 50 miles north of Spokane) is a lesser-known resort called 49 Degrees North. It only operates five days a week, Friday to Tuesday, but it too has an abundance of snow this winter. In fact, they claim that their snow conditions make it feel like skiing through grandma's featherbed.

Even though both of these resorts offer great ski conditions, they do have one significant drawback: the almighty U.S. dollar is making it extremely difficult to justify the cost of visiting them. But if you're loaded and you want to try something different, these two would be a great choice. Try telling them you're a poor Canuck—they used to take Canadian bucks at par once upon a time, but that was when our dollar was hovering near 80 cents. For more information, call Schweitzer at 1-800-831-8810. ☺

board zone

Burton presents

BY RICK OVERWATER

Taking one for the team

The January 18 announcement of the official Canadian Olympic snowboard team roster was accompanied by more than a little controversy. For one thing, there's no Women's Alpine team in the upcoming Olympics. Despite the fact that Melissa Barclay and Helene Clouthier landed in the top 35 by November 1 last year—thus qualifying them for an Olympic start position according to the FIS—the Canadian Olympic Association is refusing to send them because its rules state that you need two top-16 finishes. "We're currently appealing that," says Calgary-based CSF representative J.S. Bidal.

The CSF's reasoning, Bidal says, is that if our athletes meet the standards set outside of Canada, it makes little sense for our own officials to be the ones to snuff out the hopes of Canadian athletes. Fortunately, one weapon in the CSF arsenal is the fact that the figure skating duo Bourne and Kraatz were faced with a similar dilemma in the '94 Olympics. They won their appeal based on the fact that it would greatly enhance their development and make them contenders in the next Olympics. "We're saying that [Barclay and Clouthier] are already contenders as it stands," says Bidal.

At this point, it's old news that the FIS, the competitive skiing body that has so wisely handed control of Olympic snowboarding prior to the '98 Olympics, decided to limit Women's to 20 spots as opposed to the 25 in other events. This policy may have kept Canadians Maelle Ricker, Lori and Dominique Vallee—who won 1st, 2nd and 3rd place, respectively, in the world slalom—reported in an earlier column. Zink had already locked

down the one Canadian spot in Women's Halfpipe.

Competition was fierce, but at least no one's upset with the makeup of the men's rosters. The Parallel Giant Slalom team consists of Jasey Jay Anderson, Jerome Sylvester, Mark Fawcett and Ryan Wedding. The four riders who will be hitting the Salt Lake halfpipe are Brett Carpentier, Guillaume Morisset, Mike Michalchuk and Daniel Migneault.

Some of those names should be no surprise. Anderson was the overall Alpine FIS champion for the 2000-2001 season and currently sits third in the world rankings. Fawcett was touted as one of our best snowboard medal hopefuls in the '98 Olympics and was the GS leader (the GS has now been replaced with the much more TV-friendly PGS) until faulty

equipment gave out on him.

Calgary's Mike Michalchuk also is a '98 Nagano veteran. Since then, he's been plagued by injuries and personal problems that have kept him off the podium but not entirely out of the pipe. As time goes on, his riding has become increasingly consistent, earning him a heavily vied-for spot.

Darren Chalmers, another Alpine rider at Nagano, met the FIS criteria—the international standards necessary to attend the Olympics—but can't hit Salt Lake because the four allowable berths are already filled. Curiously enough, Chalmers placed 16th, 10 spots ahead of Anderson, in the GS in Sestriere, Italy, on January 19. And that's just one of many examples of the neck-and-neck race between Canucks for a shot at the Olympics.

Halfpipe killer Trevor Andrew also met FIS criteria, as did David Melancon, but again, there's no room on the Olympic team for them. Perhaps they can take consolation in the fact that Salt Lake could possibly be the worst place for a post-podium celebration party ever. ☺

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The EASYRIDER Condition Report

Local

Rabbit Hill - 60cm base, 5cm of new snow, All lifts and runs open
 Sunridge - Check out www.sunridgeskiarea.com on the web.
 Snow Valley - 60cm base, 5cm of new snow, All lifts open

Alberta

Sunshine - 190cm base, 79cm of new snow, 12/12 lifts, 92/92 runs open
 Silver Summit - 60cm base, Excellent skiing, machine groomed
 Lake Louise - 154cm base, 72cm of new snow, All lifts and 100+ runs open
 Fortress - 165cm base, 98cm of new snow, All lifts and 47/47 runs
 Marmot/Jasper - 150cm base, 21cm of new snow, 6/8 lifts, 74/75 of runs open
 Nakiska - 160cm base, 97cm of new snow 4/5 lifts 32/32 runs open
 Mt. Norquay - 180cm base, 80cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts 26/28 runs open
 Castle Mt. - 270cm base, 130cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts 57/59 runs open

B.C.

Silver Star - 206cm base, 30cm new snow, 6/7 lifts and 102 runs open
 Big White - 248cm base, 38cm of new snow, 112/112 runs, 12/13 lifts open
 Apex - 163cm base, 10cm of new snow, 3/5 lifts, 60/60 runs open
 Sun Peaks - 148cm base, 21 cm of new snow, 95/95 runs, 6 lifts open
 Fernie - 267cm base, 102cm of new snow, 9/10 lifts, 106/106 runs
 Kimberley - 115cm base, 61cm of new snow, 6/7 lifts, 67/67 runs open
 Panorama - 800cm total snowfall, 57cm of new snow, 10/10 lifts 100+ trails open
 Fairmont - 8cm of new snow, All lifts open
 Kicking Horse - 176cm base, 66cm of new snow, 60/64 runs open
 Red Mt. - 212cm base, 14cm of new snow, 83/83 runs, 4/5 lifts open
 Whitewater/Nelson - 249cm base, 12cm of new snow, All lifts open
 Powder Springs - 220cm base, 40cm of new snow

U.S.A.

Big Sky - 84 inches base, 3 inches of new snow, 17/17 lifts
 Mt Spokane - 70 inches base, 4 inches of new snow, 80% of lifts, 44 trails open
 Silver Mountain - 134 inches base, 16 inches of new snow, 100% of lifts, 50+ trails open
 Lookout Pass - 106 inches base, 6 inches of new snow, All lifts and trails open
 Schweitzer - 81 inches base, 0 inches of new snow, 59 trails and 100% lifts open
 49 north - 72 inches base, 0 inches of new snow, 100% of trails, 3 of lifts open

All conditions accurate as of Jan 30, 2002

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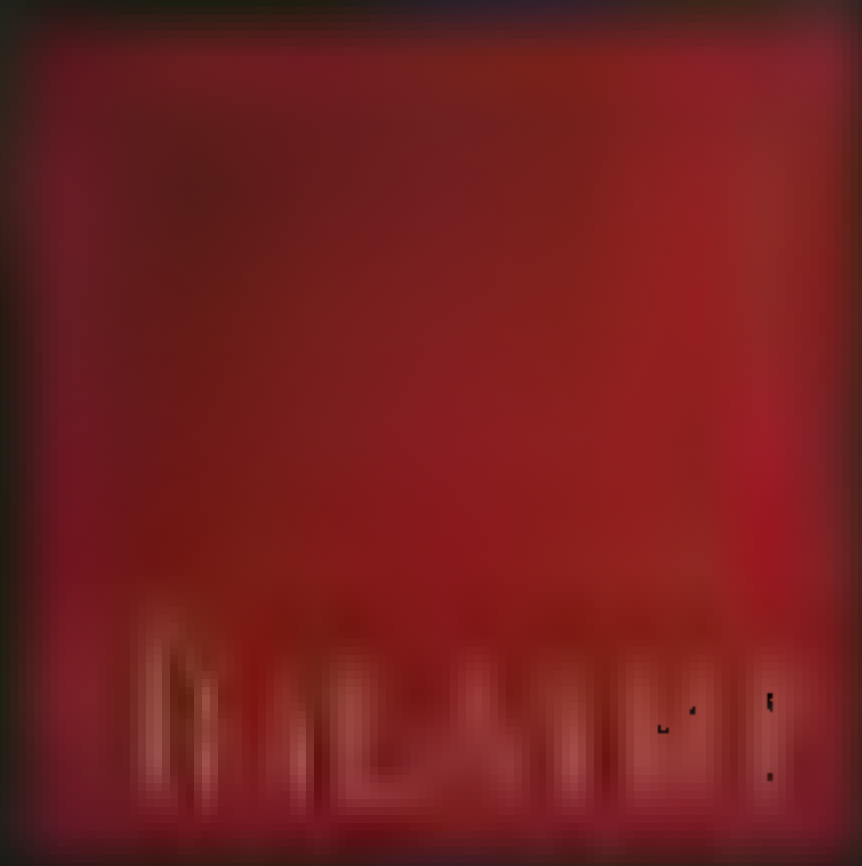
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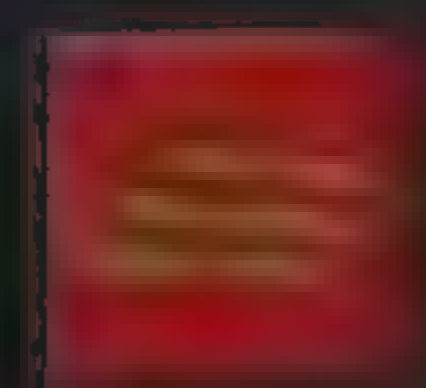
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MUSICNOTES

By WAYNE ARTHURSON

Upsy-Daisies!

Painting Daisies • Sidetrack Café
• Fri-Sat, Feb 1-2 Daisy Groff doesn't have a lot of free time these days. Today she's sitting in the Painting Daisies office, stuffing envelopes with press packages to send off around the United States. "We just got some more bookings today," she sighs. "We've got a lot of gigs."

It's not that she's unhappy about this, mind you. If things go as well as they hope, Painting Daisies may have a bright future ahead of themselves south of the border. After their two-night stand this weekend at the Sidetrack Café, the four local acousto-rockers—Groff, Rachele Van Zanten, Kim Gryba and Carolyn Fortowsky—will load up Muffy the Highway Slayer (their van) and embark on an ambitious two-month North American tour. It will take them down the west coast, across Texas and Tennessee, up the east coast to New York City and back across the tundra toward home.

"The whole thing has rocked my shocks," laughs Groff. "The van's getting mentally prepared, but she'll be ready for the trip."

All kidding aside, Groff realizes that



Painting Daisies

the trip the band made to Seattle back in 2000 for the Rockergirl conference was the golden key that unlocked the door. "After that first gig in Seattle, we were nearly attacked when we got off-stage," she recalls gleefully. "We picked up a lot of good contacts and advice while we were there."

The band has already played several gigs down in California, where they've earned a loyal fanbase. "People in Southern California seem to be so stoked about us coming back," Groff says. "They'll come for miles around to see one of our shows. It's kind of like a Grateful Dead thing."

Earning a Prairie Music Award last fall as Best Live Act—and beating out mega-act Nickelback in the process—was another boost. "It's become our calling card," Groff explains. "Because Nickelback was nominated, we're using it. I mean, why wouldn't we?"

The award still comes as a bit of a shock months later. "We were surprised more than anyone else, first and foremost," Groff says. "We just became silly babbling little girls for the rest of the night." In some ways, though, it was the perfect trophy to put on the mantel. "We love playing live. No matter how good your CD is, you can't hide anything live onstage, and that's where we love to be."

After the tour, Groff thinks the band will be more than ready to out-rock the rockers converging on Greenland this July for a festival they've been invited to play. "It's Greenland and it's nuts," Groff laughs. "Hopefully, though, we'll be able to line up some shows in Europe after that." Maybe things will go so well they'll have to beat them off with sticks. — DAVE JOHNSTON

Mosaics celebration won't be prosaic

Café Mosaics Five Year Anniversary Show • New City Likwid Lounge • Fri, Feb 1 Five years of existence doesn't automatically make you an institution, but in the restaurant business, five years is a very long time. And if you're a vegetarian/vegan restaurant in the middle of the biggest beef- and barbecue-eating province in the country, then five years is almost an eternity.

Has Café Mosaics really been around that long? It has, so to celebrate their half-decade of serving fine food to fine people Café Mosaics is holding their Five Year Anniversary Celebration at the New City Likwid Lounge. Performing at the show will be Carolyn

Mark and Her Roommates.

"Of course Carolyn is a regular," says Audrey Shenkarek, who owns Café Mosaics along with her sister Penny and Jodie and their mother. "She's in fact right here having lunch with her roommates as we speak."

Opening the restaurant five years ago seemed like a good idea at the time, even though none of the people involved actually knew anything about running or even working in the restaurant business. "I had no experience at all, either in cooking at the restaurant or waitressing, so it was crazy in the beginning," Audrey says. "And in the first year, because this was a Polish restaurant when we bought it, we basically had their clientele and they were like, 'What the hell are you people doing?' They wanted their goulash. But then we started to get people coming and now it's shocking that we've lasted so long. Well, not really. There aren't that many vegetarian or vegan restaurants around in this city and we like to play good music and attract people who like what we do."

Café Mosaics used to have regular musical performances by local acts, but now they only do special events for special friends from out of town. But that doesn't stop musical celebrities such as Wilco, Son Volt, Richard Buckner and Alejandro Escovedo from dropping by. But probably the biggest celebrity to grace their restaurant was actress (and current odds-on favourite for the Best Actress Oscar) Sissy Spacek, who had dinner there a couple years ago.

"But the best part of the job is that we are our own bosses and we get to work with our sisters and our mother who we all love very much," says Audrey.

By the way, if you're not going to the show, don't go to the restaurant that night either. They'll be closed for the celebration. They do serve a wonderful Sunday brunch, however.

This must be the Place

Black and White Goes Country • Featuring George Fox and Samantha King • Festival Place, Sherwood Park • Sat, Feb 2 It's time once again for Festival Place's annual fundraising event. This Saturday, the Sherwood Park Theatreplex is presenting Black and White Goes Country, a gala evening which promises to live up to the standard set in previous years. Canadian country star George Fox is headlining the show with special guest Samantha

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show will be live and silent auctions plus great munchies and desserts.

There are only 325 tickets to be sold to this event, at a cost of \$100 each. All the money raised is funneled directly to the operation of Festival Place. General manager Gavin Farmer says this event is probably one of the most important events of the year for the Sherwood Park institution. "We're the only venue like this in the province that doesn't get municipal subsidies," he notes, "but we're very much more involved in fundraising than most organizations. Last year this event netted about \$30,000 and last year the company made \$34,000, so that's how important this event is. We're either in the black or you don't make it. It's critical."

The construction of Festival Place eight years ago was a political hot potato; while the municipality built and helped fund the facility, it promised the people of Sherwood Park that they would not provide any operating costs. So Festival Place, unlike similar such theatres in the province, has to make its own money. That situation, however difficult it can sometimes be, has forced Festival Place to be more resourceful than the competition. "We're maybe a little more aggressive than similar types of venues," Farmer says. "We're continually moving forward, trying to generate dollars for each and every hour of the working day."

As an example of Festival Place's aggressive attitude, the day after the Black and White Goes Country show, a wrestling show is booked for the venue. "We'll generate 52 shows of our own in a year and we have to be pretty aggressive in creating income," Farmer says. "We're proud of what we accomplish, but at the same time we wish we received a little more support to cover some of our costs. But the municipality did what it had to do and the important thing is that there was no facility here eight years ago and now there's a beautiful facility available 365 days the year."

You can order your tickets for the Black and White Goes Country gala by

calling the Festival Place box office at 449-3378.

The Lynn crowd

Lynn Morris Band • Provincial Museum Theatre • Sat, Feb 2 One of the finest female vocalists in bluegrass (and one of the few female bandleaders in the bluegrass music movement), Lynn Morris, is making a appearance this Saturday at the Provincial Museum Theatre. The show's production is a co-operative effort by bluegrass societies in Edmonton, Red Deer and Calgary, who will also be hosting shows in their respective cities. Opening the show in Edmonton and Red Deer will be David Ward and Rob Baker of Lonesome and Then Some, who will be performing old-time duets under the name "The Lonesome Brothers." Tickets can be purchased at Southside Sound and Alfie Myhre's Music.

"She's definitely a highly recognized bluegrass performer and I'm looking forward to being part of the show," says David Ward, who also hosts CKUA's weekly bluegrass show. "They're not a high, uptempo or driving bluegrass band. She's a very good singer and songwriter and the band is very tight. The material is more mid-tempo with some good ballads."

Lynn Morris grew up in the small west Texas farming community of Lamesa and began her career in music after getting an arts degree. She became the first musician to twice win the National Banjo Championship (in 1974 and again in 1981) and performed for many years for U.S. soldiers around the world with the USO. She formed the Lynn Morris Band in 1988 with her husband, bassist and singer Marshall Wilborn. The band's current lineup also includes fiddler and banjo player Ron Steward and mandolin player Jesse Brock. Together, they've released four albums on Rounder Records: *The Lynn Morris Band* (1990), *The Bramble and the Rose* (1992), *Mama's Hand* (1995) and *You'll Never Be the Sun* (1999). The title track for *Mama's Hand* was the number one bluegrass song for six months in 1995 and also won the International Bluegrass Music Association

(IMBA) award for Song of the Year. Lynn Morris herself has also won the IMBA Female Vocalist of the Year title a number of times.

Not content to rest on her musical laurels, Morris was also the first woman elected to the IMBA board of directors, a post she held for six years. She recently was the subject of a major article in the *Washington Post* about women's role in bluegrass.

Saturday's show starts at 8 p.m. with doors opening at 7:30 p.m.

Dear John

ALS Benefit • Myer Horowitz Theatre • Thu, Feb 7 You can't deny it. It doesn't matter what musical genre you're more keen on listening to; if you're asked to name, sing or hum an Elton John song, you'll be able to do it. Probably more than one song, too.

That's part of the reason why a group of Edmonton musicians have chosen the music of Sir Elton to be a part of a fundraising event for the ALS Society at the Myer Horowitz Theatre in the U of A's Students' Union Building. Tickets are \$20, and are available at TIX on the Square (420-1757) or at the door. There will be refreshments and door prizes—including a collection of Elton CDs, of course.

"Brent Rock and I have been huge Elton John fans since we were about six and we did a small version of the show in Calgary," says well-known Edmonton vocalist Rhonda Withnell, who will be performing at the show along with saxophonist Ken Hoffman, bassist Don Bradshaw and drummer Dwayne Hrynkiw. "And we wanted to do another bigger show, because musically it was such a fun show and we thought, 'Wouldn't it be nice to raise money for a charity that means something to us?'"

A close friend of Rhonda's and Brent recently passed away due to ALS, so it seemed appropriate to give the proceeds to the ALS Society. ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis), more commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease, is a rapidly progressive, fatal neuromuscular disease. It can strike anyone at any time and the cause is unknown. Average life expectancy after diagnosis is 2 1/2 years. ☐

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10161/57-112 St., 413-4578. FRI 1: Mr. Carolyn Mark. No cover. SAT 2: Preshure Point, Drive-by Punch. FRI 8: DJ Radar w/ Spilt Milk. SAT 9: Downway, The Johnsons.

REV 10030-102 St., 424-2851. FRI 1: The Summerlad, Nevertheless, These Things Speak. SAT 2 (9pm door): The New Deal w/ DJ Bobby Torpedo and Amedeo. TIX \$12 adv., \$15 @ door. Adv. tickets @ Blackbyrd Myoozik, Listen, DV8, Lush, Foosh, Colourblind, Rev. THU 7: Veal, The Cleats, The Skinny. FRI 8: Mico, In Harm's Way, Time and Again.

BLUES AND ROOTS

ARDEN THEATRE 5 St. Anne St., St. Albert, 459-1542. FRI 1 (7:30pm): Women in Song: Lynn Miles, Rita Chiarelli. TIX \$21.50 adult, \$20 youth/senior.

THE ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL 7704-104 St., 432-4611. •Every THU (9pm): Open mic night with Leona.

THE BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE 10425 Whyte Ave., 439-1082. •Every SAT (3-6pm): Hair of the Dog. No cover. SAT 2: The Stone Merchants. No cover. SAT 9: Uncas. No cover.

BLUES ON WHYTE Commercial Hotel, 10329 Whyte Ave., 439-5058. THU 31-SAT 2: Harpdog Brown and the Bloodhounds. SUN 3: Rotting Fruit. MON 4-SAT 9: Jack de Keyser. SUN 10: All-Stars.

CAPITOL HILL PUB 14203 Stony Plain Rd., 454-3063. FRI 1-SAT 2: New Old Boys.

CONRAD'S SUGARBOWL ON 124TH 10724 124th St., 451-1038. •Every THU: Open Cage: Acoustic jam hosted by Ben Spencer. •Every SUN: Ordinary Day: Jungle with Royale and guests.

DEVON HOTEL Restaurant, 1 Huron St., Devon. THU 7: Genie (female soul band). Fundraiser.

THE DRUID 11606 Jasper Ave., 454-

9928. MON 19: Tadtional Irish Session. TUE 20: Chris Wynters (from Captain Tractor). WED 21: Trio Night.

EXPRESSIONZ CAFÉ, MARKET AND MEETING PLACE 9142-118 Ave., 471-9125. THU 31: Open stage. FRI 1: Bissett and Watt Band. SAT 2: Mary Rankin and the Not So Lonely. THU 7: Open Stage. FRI 8: Mike Sadava. SAT 9: Kauni.

FULL MOON FOLK CLUB Bonnie Doon Hall, 9240-93 St., 438-6410, 420-1757. SAT 2 (7pm door): David Essig, Mississippi Steamboat. TIX \$14 adult @ TIX on the Square.

HONEST MUR'S BAR AND GRILL 8937-82 Ave., 463-6397. •Every THU (9:30-10pm): Open stage w/ Keep Six. All musicians welcome. FRI 1-SAT 2 (9:30pm-1:30am): Mr. Lucky (blues, boogie, R&B). No cover.

J & R's GRILL AND BAR 4003-106 St., 436-4403. SAT 9 (9pm-1am): Mr. Lucky (blues, boogie, R&B). No cover.

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NORTHERN BLUEGRASS CIRCLE MUSIC SOCIETY •Pleasantview Community Hall, 10860-57 Ave., 487-7931, 434-5997. •WED night jam sessions. •Provincial Museum Theatre, 12845-102 Ave. SAT 2 (7:30pm door): The Lynn Morris Band. TIX \$20 member, \$25 non-member. Adv. tickets @ jam sessions or @ Alfie Myhre's Music, Southside Sound.

NORTHERN LIGHTS FOLK CLUB Queen Alexandra Community Hall, 10425 University Ave., 438-2736. FRI 8: Willie P. Bennett, Mike Stack. TIX \$12 adv., \$14 @ door.

O'BYRNE'S 10616 Whyte Avenue, 414-6766. •Every TUE: Celtic Night w/ Shannon Johnson and friends.

THE POLISH HALL 10960-104 St. FRI 8: Comedy show and dance party: DJ Whoo Kid, Genie (female soul band).

RAY'S SPORTS BAR 15211-111 Ave., 486-3390. SAT 2: Rusty Reed Band.

ROSIES BAR AND GRILL 124TH STREET 10315-124 St., 482-1600.

•Every SAT (5-9pm): Alberta Crude (blues, country).

SECOND CUP 10303 Jasper Ave. •Every Thu (7:30-10:30pm): Acoustic open stage hosted by Ron Taylor

SIDETRACK CAFÉ 10333-112 St., 42-1326. THU 31 (10pm): Thirst n' Howl. \$3 cover. FRI 1-SAT 2 (10pm): Painting Daisies, Kris Demeanor. \$6 cover. SUN (8pm): Sunday Night Live: Mustard Smile, Killer Comedy Show, DJ Dudeman. \$6 cover. MON 4-TUE 5 (9:30pm): Uncas Old Boys and the Dustkickers (alt. country). No cover. WED 6-THU 7 (9:30pm): Elsie Osborne (R&B). No cover Wed; \$3 cover Thu. TUE 8-WED 9: Hot Cottage, Craft Horn (blues, swing). SUN 10 (10pm): Sunday Night Live: My Huge Ass, Killer Comedy Show, DJ Dudeman. \$6 cover.

SUGARBOWL CAFÉ AND BAR 10922-88 Ave. •Every FRI songwriter night. FRI 1: Double Bill: Mike Sadava, Chris Smith. \$5 cover. SUN 10 (2pm) Proxyboy, Thomas Golub.

TIM'S GRILL 7106-109th St., 413-9606. FRI 1: Paul Bellows.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA Myer Horowitz Theatre, Students Union Building. FRI 1 (7:30-10pm): Rhythms of the Planet: Drumcan Man, Okoto Dancers, Capoeira, Viajante Drumming Ensemble, Buffalo Tail Productions. TIX \$10 adv., \$8 adv. student @ SUB ticket centre, International Centre, Department of Music Office; \$12, \$10 student @ door. •451-8000. SAT 2 (8pm): Danny Michel and Martina Sorbara. Presented by Edmonton Folk Music Society. TIX \$15 @ TicketMaster. FRI 8: Bringing Fish. SUN 10: The Lester Quitzau Very Electric Trio, Mae Moore. TIX @ Blackbyrd Myoozik.

UPTOWN FOLK CLUB Woodcroft Community Hall, 13915-115 Ave., 438-1554. FRI 8: Songwriter Teachers: John Spearn, Tim Sommerfield, Marv Machura.

WEST END CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH 10015-149 St., 482-7649, 420-1757. SAT 9 (2pm and 7pm). Stories: Kokopelli Performance Troup, Prairie Voices, Edmonton Children's Choir. TIX \$12 adult, \$10 student/senior, \$4 child under 14 @ door or TIX on the Square.

WINSPEAR CENTRE 4 Sir Winston Churchill Sq., 99 St., 102A Ave., 428

SEE NEXT PAGE

HORIZON

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7:30 pm

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VUE WEEKLY

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MUSICWEEKLY

Continued from previous page

420-1757. SAT 9 (8pm): The
at Winspear: Celebrating Sarah
ghan: Dianne Reeves with the
monton Symphony Orchestra. TIX
orchestra/dress; \$45 upper circle;
gallery.

CLASSICAL

ALBERTA COLLEGE CONSERVATORY
MUSIC Muttart Hall, 10050
Donald Drive, 423-6230. SUN 10
(2pm): Faculty recital: Don Ross (clar-
inet).

EDMONTON CLASSICAL GUITAR
DONALD DRIVE, 10050
MacDonald Dr., 433-3742, 420-1757.
FRI 1 (8pm):
Tennant Master Class. TIX \$10 audi-
tium, \$25 performer, \$5 disc. to ECGS
member. •Muttart Hall. FRI 1 (8pm):
Tennant. TIX \$18, \$15
student/senior/member @ TIX on the
square, Avenue Guitars, The
mophone @ door.

EDMONTON SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA Winspear Centre, 4 Sir
Johnston Churchill Sq., 428-1414. FRI 1-
2 (8pm): A Masters Collection:
Georgy Nowak (conductor), Jan Urke
(double bass). TIX \$20-\$60 student/sen-
ior discounts available. \$10.00 student
tickets available from the Winspear
Centre Box Office one hour prior to any
regular ESO classical concert. SUN 3
(2pm): Super special: Tafelmusik. TIX
\$3-\$44. Student and senior discounts
available.

BILIEE AUDITORIUM 11455-87
St., 420-1757. WED 6 (7pm): Wind
the East: The University of Alberta
phony, The Alberta College Harp
artet, The Alberta College Flute Choir,
Highlands Handbell Choir, The
monton Chinese Philharmonic. TIX
(main fl.), \$12 (balconies) @ TIX on
Square.

EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH
St., 84 Ave., 420-1757, 424-3685.
3 (8pm), SUN 10 (2pm):
ana-Music of the Elizabethans:
ilena Consort with Mireille Rijavec
alto-soprano). TIX \$15 adult, \$10
student/senior @ TIX on the Square.

JOHNSON-WESLEY UNITED
CHURCH 10209-123 St., SUN 3 (3pm):
ndor of the Baroque: Alberta
que Ensemble. TIX \$22 adult, \$17
senior @ TIX on the Square.
420-1757, 429-1655. SUN 10 (3pm):
s at 3 Recital Series: Robin John
TIX \$12 adult, \$10 student/senior,
and under free. Tickets @ TIX
Square.

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CHURCH 10209-123 St., SUN 3 (3pm):
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TIX \$12 adult, \$10 student/senior,
and under free. Tickets @ TIX
Square.

COUNTRY

FESTIVAL PLACE 100 Festival Way,
Sherwood Park, 449-3378. SAT 2
(5:30pm): Black and White Goes
Country Gala: George Fox, Samantha
King. TIX \$100 all ages.

HORIZON STAGE 1001 Calahoo Rd.,
Spruce Grove, 962-7631, 451-8000. SAT
9 (7:30pm): Kenny Hess. TIX \$20 adult,
\$15 student/senior @ Horizon Stage Box
Office, TicketMaster.

LONGRIDER'S SALOON 11733-78 St.,
479-7400. THU 31: Ken McCoy.

ST. THOMAS COFFEE HOUSE 44 St.
Thomas Street, St. Albert, 458-8225.
•Every THU (7:30-11:30pm): Open Jam
with Jim and Penny.

JAZZ

FOUR ROOMS RESTAURANT
Edmonton Centre, 102 Ave. entrance,
426-4767. THU 31 (9pm): The
Alterations Quartet. FRI 1 (9pm):
Proxyboy. SAT 2: The Brett Miles Tiro.
THU 7 (9pm): Ian and Fred (Hi-Phonics).
FRI 8 (9pm): Shelley Jones. SAT 9 (9pm):
The [Sic] Trio.

ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH
9915-148 St., 420-1757. SAT 2 (2pm
and 7:30pm): *Form and Nuf* presented
by the Columbian Jazz Choirs. TIX \$10
adult, \$8 student/senior, \$25 family @
door, TIX on the Square.

YARDBIRD SUITE 11 Tommy Banks
Way, 103 St., 86 Ave., 432-0428, 451-
8000. FRI 1 (8pm door): Ben Sures
Swing Manouche, Aaron Keys Sextet.
TIX \$5 member, \$9 guest. SAT 2 (8pm
door): Möbius Quartet. TIX \$5 member,
\$9 guest. FRI 8-SAT 9: Bud Shank, Joe
Labarbera.

ZENARI'S ON 1ST 10117-101 St.,
425-6151. FRI 1 (8pm-midnight): Jeff
Hendrick.

PIANO BARS

LION'S HEAD PUB Coast Terrace Inn,
4440 Calgary Trail S., 431-5815. THU
31-SAT 2: Richard Blaze.

SHERLOCK HOLMES CAPILANO
Capilano Mall, 5004-98 Ave., 463-7788.
THU 31-SAT 2: Tony Poirier. THU 7-SAT
9: Darryl Kitlitz.

SHERLOCK HOLMES DOWNTOWN
Rice Howard Way, 10012-101A Ave.,
426-7784. THU 31-SAT 2: Chuck
Belhuimer. TUE 5-SAT 9: Mark
Magarrigle.

SHERLOCK HOLMES WEM Bourbon
St., W.E.M., 444-1752. THU 31-SAT 2:
Mark Magarrigle. MON 4-SAT 9: Sam
August.

SHERLOCK HOLMES ON WHYTE
10341-82 Ave., 433-9676. •Every SUN
(9pm-1am): Karaoke. THU 31-SAT 2:
Duff Robison. WED 6-SAT 9: Derrick
Sigurdson.

POP AND ROCK

Also see VUE Weekly on page 32.

CASINO EDMONTON 9055 Argyll Rd.,



463-9467. FRI 1-SAT 2: Stan Foster. FRI
8-SAT 9: Silverhawk.

CASINO YELLOWHEAD 12464-153
St., 463-9467. THU 31-SAT 2: Deep
Cover. THU 7-SAT 9: Souled Out.

J.J.'S PUB 13160-118 Ave., 451-9180.
FRI 1-SAT 2: Absolute Zero (rock). WED
6: Genie (female soul band), Lisa Clarke
(pop singer). Fundraiser. FRI 8-SAT 9:
Think Not Think (blues/rock).

KINGSKNIGHT PUB 9221-34 Ave.,
433-2599. THU 31: Haven.

MYER HOROWITZ THEATRE U of A
Campus, SUB, 420-1757. THU 7 (8pm):
An Evening of the Music of Elton John:
Rhonda Withnell (vocals), Brent Rock
(piano), Ken Hoffman (saxophone), Don
Bradshaw (bass), Dwayne Hrynkiw
(drums), Jim Head (guitar). Benefit.
Proceeds to the A.L.S. (Lou Gehrig's
Disease) Society of Alberta. TIX \$20 @
TIX on the Square, @ door.

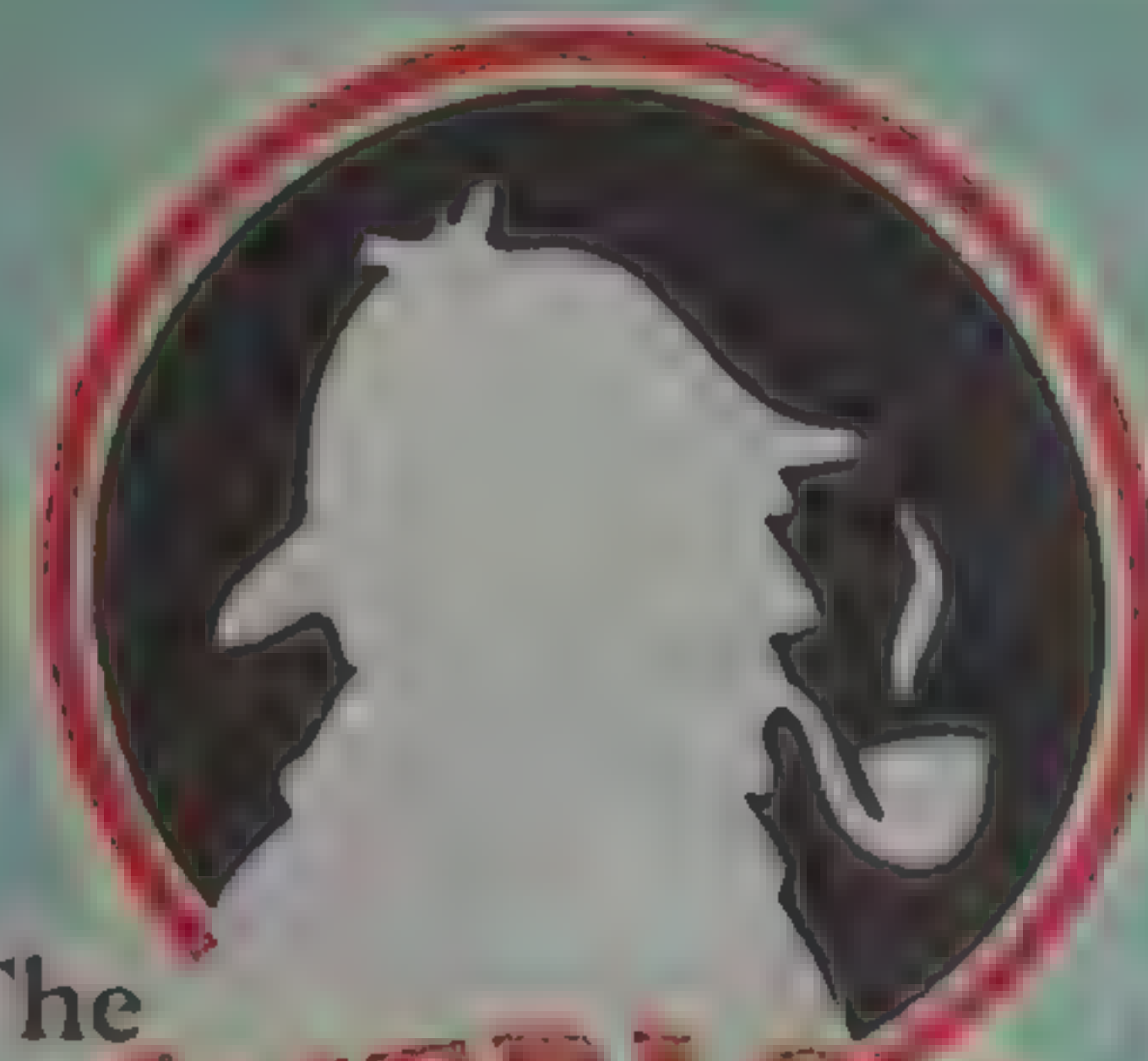
OTTEWELL PUB 6108-90 Ave., 450-
5953. •Every MON (9pm): Open stage
hosted by Willy James.

RED'S WEM, 487-2066. SAT 9 (6pm
door): Bif Naked, Project Wyze, Swollen
Members, Jelleestone, Freshbread.

ROCK CENTRAL STATION Kingsway
Inn, 10812 Kingsway Ave., 479-4266
FRI 1-SAT 2: Typhoid Mary. FRI 8-SAT 9:
Typhoid Mary.

TIN PAN ALLEY 4804 Calgary Tr. S.,
702-2060. FRI 1 (10pm): Wowzer. SAT 2
(10pm): Hi-Phonics. SAT 2 (9:30pm):
Hi-Phonics. TIX \$5 @ door. SAT 9: The
Mahones (Celtic rock).

URBAN LOUNGE 8111-105 St., 439-
3388. •Every TUE: Urban Unplugged.
THU 31-SAT 2: Mustard Smile. \$3 cover
Thu; \$5 cover Fri/Sat. TUE 5: Urban
Unplugged. WED 6: Dilettantes,
Clusterfuzz. \$5 cover. THU 7-SAT 9:
Matthew's Grin. \$5 cover.



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FEB 7-9 DARRYL KITLITZ

WEST EDMONTON MALL

JAN 29-FEB 2 MARK MAGARRIGLE

FEB 4-9 SAM AUGUST

WHYTE AVENUE

JAN 31-FEB 2 DUFF ROBISON

FEB 6-9 DERRICK SIGURDSON

DOWNTOWN

JAN 31-FEB 2 CHUCK BELHUIMER

FEB 5-9 MARK MAGARRIGLE

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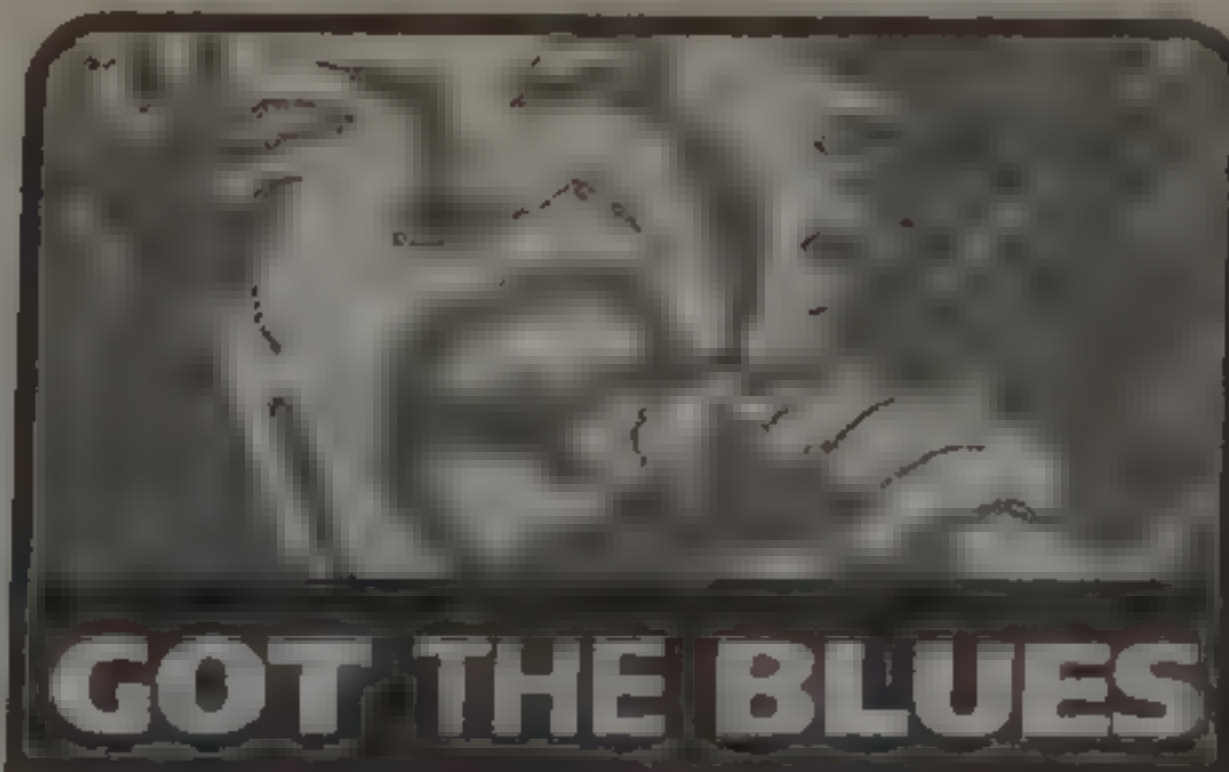
JAN 31-FEB 2

Harpdog Brown & The Bloodhounds

FEB 3 Rotting Fruit

FEB 4 - 9 Jack Dekeyser

10329 Whyte Avenue • 439-3981



By CAM HAYDEN

Bless you, Janiva!

As I sit down to write this, the temperature has been hovering around the minus-25° mark for about a week. Not so bad for us denizens of the frozen north, but if you came to Edmonton from Los Angeles, as Janiva Magness did last week, you'd be wondering how people survive in these parts. Magness, in fact, was asking that very question last Saturday night as she took another pull on the bottle of Lo-Quat Chinese herbal cure she'd picked up to battle the nasty cold she acquired in our town. Cold and all, she put on a string of fine shows to full houses at the Sidetrack last Thursday through Saturday. "I can't quite hit some of those higher notes," she told me, "so I'm selecting material that lets me work with I've got vocally." The strategy seemed to work—Saturday night's audience even called her back for an encore.

If, like Janiva Magness, you're looking for some relief from Edmonton's Arctic temperatures, you might want to take in an ocean voyage during which Magness herself and some of her friends from southern California will provide the entertainment. The

three-day "Blues Cruise" is offered by Windrose Cruises and radio station KLON in Los Angeles. Departing San Pedro on Friday, March 15, the Carnival cruise ship *Ecstasy* will steam south to Ensenada, Mexico for a day and then head back to San Pedro for an early Monday-morning docking. Along the way, in between the six squares a day they serve on cruises, you can catch concerts by Magness, James Harman, Johnny Tucker and Doug Macleod. Berths start at \$349 (U.S.); you can get more info online at www.windrosecruises.com.

One final bit of news regarding Janiva Magness: she has just put the finishing touches on an as-yet-untitled album she recorded with Kid Ramos of Fabulous Thunderbirds fame. Look for an early summer release.

For an entirely different take on the blues, drop by St. Albert's Arden Theatre this Friday night for a rather unique pairing of Lynn Miles and Rita Chiarelli titled "Women in Song." Miles is well-known as a talented singer/songwriter in the folk/roots vein, while Chiarelli, who closes out the show, has honed her talent over the past decade as a blues-based singer over the course of four discs. Her latest, *Breakfast at Midnight*, contains 11 Chiarelli originals showcasing her expressive, three-octave vocal range, hard-edged guitar-playing and growing maturity as a songwriter. While this evening may not be a "blues" show in the traditional sense, the elements of a great night of music are all there—emotion, good songwriting and performers who bring their entire heart and soul to the stage.

On the local front, harmonica

player Harpdog Brown is celebrating his 40th birthday all this week at the Commercial Hotel. His actual "birthday" was Monday night and when a bleary-voiced Jim Good, who books the room, called me Tuesday he left no doubt that a good time had been had by all. The current version of the Bloodhounds features Winnipeg's own Brent Parkin, so a trip to the Blues on Whyte is in order this week for any blues fan who would like some hot guitar to warm up a cold winter evening.

Speaking of harmonica players, Rusty Reed is one that hasn't been heard from in these parts for quite a while. In fact, Reed's last gig in Edmonton was a charity affair in September for the "Crystal Kids" group. Nevertheless, he's put together a quintet for a gig at a rather unlikely spot this Saturday: Ray's Restaurant, at 15211-111 Avenue, is hosting a customer appreciation night with live music from 8 p.m. to midnight. Reed will be joined by what he calls his "A-Team": Jim Guiboche on guitar, Gary Bowman on keys and the rhythm section of Scott Anderson and Fred Larose on drums and bass. If all goes well, live music on Saturday nights may become a regular feature in the 200-seat room. Cover is a very reasonable five bucks, so drop by and check it out. ♡

Cam Hayden hosts the Friday Night Blues Party from 9 p.m. to midnight on the CKUA Radio Network. He is also a partner in Blues International Ltd., producers of Edmonton's Labatt Blues Festival.

Edmonton's Best Rock 100.3 fm
THE BEAR

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Danny Michel has ice water in his veins

But indie pop-rocker's songs have warmth in their lyrics

BY DAN RUBINSTEIN

Upon first inspection, Danny Michel appears to possess all the telltale habits of a quintessentially Canadian. He endures endless drives across the prairies and 5:30 a.m.

wake-up calls in Thunder Bay to make it to dead-of-winter gigs in cities like Winnipeg and Saskatoon. He teams up with compatible fellow Canucks like Sarah Harmer to impress audiences in the United States. He collaborates with like-minded and amazingly talented indie luminaries such as Don Kerr and Andy Stochansky to make sincere, original records. And he acknowledges that it's quite possible nobody outside Southern Ontario would know who he is if CBC Radio didn't set aside airtime for artists who don't fit into the pigeonholes of commercial radio.

Dig a little deeper, however—about chest deep in a lake of icy water—and you'll realize Michel is more than a quintessentially Canadian musician; he's a quintessential Canadian. For starters, he lives in a cool rented boathouse complete with a spiral staircase on the shore of Puslinch Lake near Cambridge, Ontario. It's a secluded place where he can pound the snare drum in the middle of the night (no euphemism intended) without pissing off any neighbours. In the summertime, he'll lick open the electric garage door and the waves practically lap into his bedroom. It's just as idyllic in

the wintertime. Except when the snowmobiles buzz past every 10 minutes. And when you fall through the ice.

"It was horrible," Michel recounts, describing his recent frigid plunge that he "magically" extricated himself from. "I highly recommend *not* doing that." Miles from home, shivering cold and soaking wet, he trudged back to the boathouse, showered, put on some warm clothes, drank some tea—then drove to a concert he had to play that night. "It made for a good story," Michel says, "but I don't think anyone believed me."

From brawl to Belly

A pop-oriented rock 'n' roller originally from Kitchener-Waterloo, Michel's varied contributions to the Canadian music mosaic date back to 1985, when he was 15 years old and opened for DOA. A brawl broke out that night, but neither the fight nor the cops showing up deterred Michel. He joined a band called the Rhinos, released records and toured the country. The ensuing decade and a half saw him front his own groups—Danny Michel and the Collectibles and Danny Michel's Allstar Band—and put in a stint with Ottawa popsters Starling. Now he's happily solo, touring in support of the self-produced *In the Belly of a Whale*, which he completed back in June but will finally be available in music stores on February 5.

"The record never really got a fair push," explains Michel, calling from a gas station pay phone en route to dates in western Canada. "I put it out and I know it sounds dumb and lazy, but I didn't put a lot of effort into promoting it." Starting to work with Sarah Harmer's manager Patrick Sambrook helped Michel

secure another way to distribute the disc on top of Internet and off-stage sales. "It takes connections," he says, "which I don't have. But people listen when Patrick talks."

Cohen, Cohen, gone

With its catchy riffs, a splashing of strings, accessible yet elliptical lyrics and a cast of notable players (including Blue Rodeo's Glenn Milchem on drums and Veal's Luke Doucet on guitar), you'd think commercial radio would be paying attention to *In the Belly of a Whale*. But Michel is just too cagey for his own good. His songs—though many are about universal, matters-of-the-heart themes like lost love—are given enough of a tweak, enough humour and inventive wordplay, to drive away the playlist gods. "I'm like the plague," suggests Michel. "Anything that borders on getting a little too artsy is outta there. You can't get too clever."

That penchant for wordplay shows itself on tracks like "Toledo," an ostensibly straight-ahead lonely-phonecall-from-a-hotel-lobby ballad with inexplicably touching rhymes like "I'm sure it's indisputable/ I hear Toledo's beautiful." Phrases like this came naturally to Michel when he started writing songs. Now they've become his style. "I try to be serious but not too serious," he says. "I don't want to be as heavy as Leonard Cohen. I try to make people cry through their laughter. Or laugh through their tears. So that they think, 'Yeah, this sucks, but everything is gonna be alright.'"

Sort of like how Michel reacts when he has to wake up at 5:30 in the morning in Thunder Bay. Or when he falls through the ice. ☺

Danny Michel
With Martin Sorbara • Myer Horowitz
Theatre • Sat, Feb 2

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Cafe Mosaics 5th anniversary party
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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Sat Feb 2

Preshure Point and Drive-by Punch!!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Fri Feb 8

DJ Radar with Spilt Milk and guests!!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Sat Feb 9

Sessions records artists from calgary
Downway with guests The Johnsons

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Fri Feb 15

Parkade, with Nathan (Winnipeg), and
Kara Kieth feat. Dave of Chixdiggitt!!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Sat Feb 16

A Tribute to the Ramones, benefitting the
Cancer Society, featuring
Wednesday Night Heroes, Drastics,
The Skinny, Les Tabernacles,
Shugler Jensen, and Fugazi Ozzbourne

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TUESDAYS: EMO, SCREAMO, AND
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WEDNESDAYS: FUNKY GROOVES
WITH COOL CURT AND SLACKS

FRIDAYS: NEEDEY, NIK ROFEELYA &
BLUE JAY PLAYING ALTERNATIVE

SATURDAY: SATURDAYS SUCK!!
DJ NIK ROFEELYA AND BLUE JAY

SUNDAY: DJ NIK ROFEELYA
PLAYS GOTH. INDUSTRIAL

CLASSICALNOTES

BY ALLISON KYDD

Orff and running

Those who attended the Pro Coro Canada concert on January 27 expecting music that transcends the ordinary were not disappointed. Neither were those who relish parody at its most bawdy or satirical. German composer Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, stirring music set to a collection of 13th-century secular songs discovered in a old German monastery, offered that in abundance. In addition, Malcolm Forsyth's *Hesperides*, a setting of 17th-century poet Robert Herrick's erotic poems of the same name, was a two-harp sampler which challenged any preconceptions that harps are dainty,

ladylike instruments.

The Sunday afternoon program began, however, with contrasting sentiments in the premiere of Alan Gilliland's *Blessed*, composed to the text of a poem by Andy Northrup. In it, the innocence of childhood is idolized and family life set up as the ideal which restores adults, whether they're caught in traffic or the dehumanizing rush for worldly success. As with visual art, empty space is also part of musical composition, and Gilliland worked effectively with ringing silences as well as choral harmonies. The placement of *Blessed* first on the program was an interesting choice, considering that the works to follow were the antithesis of innocence. No doubt the juxtaposition was intentional.

From the first heavy strumming which opened the second work, *Hesperides*, harpists Nora Bumanis and Keri Lynn Zwicker presented the harp as a virtuoso instrument. Bumanis and Zwicker are local performers and teachers whose total experience ranges from the Edmonton Symphony and the Alberta College Conservatory of Music to the Paragon Duo and

Cowboy Celtic, as well as tours and recordings. This instrumental adventurousness was well-suited to Herrick's songs of swains perplexed in the "hinder-parts" and virgins gathering rosebuds "while they may" and making much of time. The exquisite sound of the Pro Coro chorus is impossible to overpraise, and the interplay between voices in the song-dialogue "The Kisse" was particularly juicy.

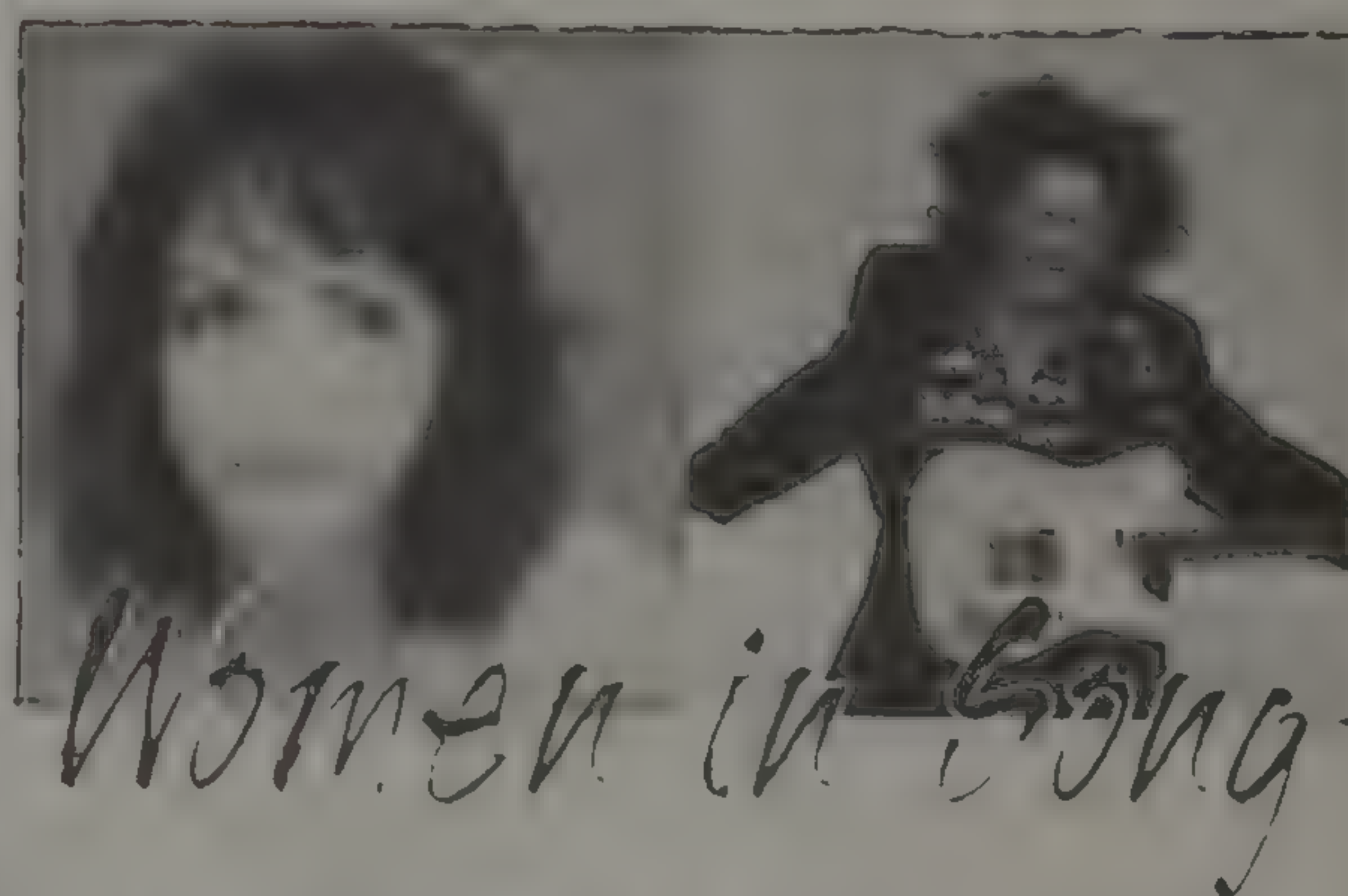
It was the gorgeous *Carmina Burana* everyone was waiting for, however, and it delivered. The casting of solo roles was brilliant: baritone Marc Boucher and tenor John Tessier were both handsome and passionate and coloratura female lead Sharla Nafziger challenged Shakespeare's Juliet as an eager conquest. "May God grant, may the gods grant what I have in mind: that I may loose the chains of her virginity," sang Boucher. "Dulcissime, totam tibi subdo me! (Sweetest one! I give myself to you completely!)," responded Nafziger, an offer made all the more effective by her virginal appearance. Tessier seemed wasted on one song, though it was the funniest of the afternoon. The roasting swan, now lying on the platter and showing the bared teeth descending remembers its former beauty and freedom. A metaphor for lost virginity, perhaps?

The casting of the Cantillon Children's Choir was not such a happy choice. There was more than a little dissonance between those young faces and silvery voices and the text: "Cupid flies everywhere seized by desire. Young men and women are rightly coupled!" Admittedly, modern parents, teachers and caretakers cherish rather mawkish ideas about the innocence of childhood and the provocative texts have a striking resemblance to certain rock and reggae songs.

One wonders if this collection of songs being "lost" under some monk's bunk for countless years was a convenient method of censoring material too hot to handle. Some of the lyrics are not only erotic to the point of lasciviousness but many of the lines also lampoon religion: "I am the abbot of Cockaigne and my assembly is one of drinkers."

However surprising it is to our daintier modern ears, such excessive outpourings by wandering clerics and their students were not unusual during the early Renaissance. Much is also life-affirming about both the words and the music. The splendid opening chorus, "O Fortuna," repeated at the end of the work, is a comment on the fleeting nature of life. From there, the lyricist worships the coming of spring, the sun, the woods, the lawn and the earthly pleasures of love. A little further on, it creates the scene inside a tavern, the company suggesting there are few who don't indulge.

Coming up this week: Scott Tennant, founding member of the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, multiple recording artist and medalist in many international guitar competitions performs at Alberta College Muttart Hall on Friday, February 1 at 8 p.m. Featured in the Edmonton Symphony's evening performance on February 1 and 2, under the baton of Gerhard Zimmerman, is double bassist Jan Urke. John McPherson, alto trombonist with Edmonton Symphony, is guest artist with the Alberta Baroque Ensemble at Robertson-Wesley United Church on Sunday, February 2 at 3 p.m. ☐



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VUE Weekly

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The New Deal
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samplers or
sequencers

DAVE JOHNSTON

says. "Some great records have been made by machines. All the music that's been recorded was recorded by machines, though. I think if you can add the human factor to it, then you create some kind of intangible that takes it away from just being generated by bits and bytes. That's the thing. People will pay good money to stare at a guy spinning a record. You could put a machine there that could do that. With us, there's an interaction, and people can see things are changing based on what is happening on stage and in the audi-

house
prave

ence. The audience could fall *en masse* on the floor, and that would affect what's going on with the music." So touring in the middle of winter, stage gear in tow, isn't an alien concept to them. "You'd think we'd know better by now," Shields laughs, remarking about the snow that has blanketed the entire country. "It was just a question of scheduling, and we weren't able to get [this tour] in at any other time. There's been so much stuff going on and so much coming up that this was the only time we could do it. And we groaned when we knew it was going to happen, but there's nothing you can do about it."

From Live to Jive

There's been nary a slow moment in the New Deal's career ever since they started out jamming back in 1999, creating ambient downtempo soundscapes which they captured on their indie debut, *This Is Live*. As more people started turning up at their gigs, the faster the sound became. And the gigs kept rolling in. As

Shields puts it, "The development arc of the band has been ridiculous."

Last year, the band was courted by Jive Electro, a division of the major American indie label Jive Zomba, home of Britney Spears and the Backstreet Boys. Jive Electro was formed a few years ago to release more adventurous forms of dance music from drum 'n' bass to house, and there are few things more adventurous than a band that plays live dance music without the help of drum machines, samplers and sequencers. At least you'd think so.

"There's no way you could like this band without seeing us live," Shields begins. "When they see it, they get it. When Jive Zomba wanted to sign us, there were also a bunch of people well-versed in music who came out to our show who were not convinced that they wanted to take us on. We didn't care, because we weren't chasing them—they were after us. After the show, the head of marketing came up us and summed it up when he said, 'Now that I've seen you, I get it.'"

With a signed deal in their hands, the band sunk their advance into a state-of-the-art recording rig they could bring out on the road with them. With hundreds of shows on deck, they headed into the studio to hack the tapes down with computers into concise tracks.

"We had previously released three albums that were comprised of three 20-minute songs," Shields explains. "So the next thing we had to do was take the energy of what we do live and try to bring it down to four or five minutes so that when you listen to the record, you didn't have to rely on the experience of

seeing us live. We wanted to make a cool record you could listen to. I think we did succeed in capturing the character of the band, and not have [the album] turn into a milquetoast version of the band live."

Deal appeal

The self-titled album, thanks to the support of Jive Electro, has since turned into a powerful marketing tool. "We played Fredericton, New Brunswick last night, and without a video or any airplay, 300 people turned up. And they all paid to come see the New Deal—they weren't there because it was wing night."

The jamming aesthetic of their live shows has always attracted an audience outside of the expected club kids. "Ever since the beginning," Shields says, "we could play a hardcore dance club one night, a jazz festival the next, and have the same reaction both times. You get people interested solely in dance music, and then you get those who are interested in watching us improvise a set. Then you get the types who are into the technical element of it all, like soloing and such. What's cool is that you can get all three types of people in a crowd, and most of the time all three can walk away satisfied with the show."

It's a far cry from when the band started out. Their first gig was attended by no less than six people. "That was when we recorded *This Is Live*," Shields recalls. "For our second disc, *Live from Portland, Maine*, we recorded it at a club during one of the worst snowstorms of the century, and there were six people there as well. But they were fantastic shows.

We record every night, because you could go up and play something really cool and we have to hear it again if we're going to play it again. So many of the little themes that we use were once made up on the spot somewhere at some show."

You're getting it all backwards

Compared to other bands Shields has spent time in, the experience of the New Deal has been nothing but smooth. "We're all on the same wavelength. We manage ourselves, because we all understand what direction we need to move in, and we don't get bogged down in the minutiae of trivialities. Everybody gets the big picture, and that was never the case in any of the other bands."

Unlike a DJ, who might dream of becoming an artist to escape the drudgery of moving from club to club, the New Deal wants to stay onstage for as long as they can. "In true New Deal style, we do things backwards," Shields laughs again. "Rather than have a live show to promote the album, the album promotes the live show. I think we know which side our bread is buttered on, and that doesn't mean we can't put out good studio albums. But the band feeds off the emotion from the audience. There's an action from us, a reaction from the audience and a reaction from us. We don't talk about what we're going to do. There's no setlist. We just get onstage and play." ☺

The New Deal

With DJs Bobby Torpedo and Alvarado

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On the Nikkel over there

Dale Nikkel wrestles with the big questions in *Still Learning Tricks*

BY GABINO TRAVASSOS

In the same way that you might ask a plumber about your plugged kitchen sink, you might ask a Christian songwriter about the meaning of life. Especially if you find he is wracked with doubts and fears that mirror your own. Growing old. Finding meaning. Forgiveness. Faith. But Dale Nikkel doesn't think of himself as an authority on any matter and is awkward when pushed for meaning.

"My songs are just as much about self-doubt and struggle as faith," he says. "I don't think of myself as someone who's figured it out, I'm just kind of bushwhacking my way through, enjoying the way. It's my experiences that I've written songs about, and people are hopefully going to listen to the album and put their own experiences into the songs."

A low-key singer from a Winnipeg Mennonite background, Nikkel has lived in Edmonton for the past six years keeping a subdued musical profile. This Sunday's release party for *Still Learning Tricks* is an unusual show for

Nikkel: it features one of two bands he's been rehearsing with. The other is in Winnipeg priming for a CD release at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Winnipeg is also home to Patrick Neufeld, the painter Nikkel commissioned to turn each song on the CD into a painting.

Easel on down the road

"I saw his paintings once," Nikkel explains, "and they had a real story-book feel to them. One of the first times we met I asked him if he'd be interested in doing something for me, and he said he'd try it out. I mailed him three songs on a cassette the next week and went to Winnipeg three months later. It was beautiful work. In the next year we started trading songs back and forth, sending me photos of what he'd been doing. The original idea is to take them on the road and do gallery exhibits. Right now I just have Edmonton and Winnipeg. I'm going to hold onto them until the



Dale Nikkel

end of March and hope to head west for a tour and take the paintings with me."

Nikkel's debut self-titled CD in 1999 was a mild acoustic treatment of songs of love and hope. So a demo track recorded at Riverdale

Recorders that survived to be pressed is a complete pop-rock surprise, with "na na na"s and a bouncy chorus. Nikkel assures me that while the CD release party will feature Kimball Siebert on electric guitar, Steve Abma on bass and Tyrn Armstrong on drums, the tone will be introspective and reflective.

"I grasp for faith," he says. "If you look at the society we're in right now, it's a mess. How do you reconcile some of these things that are going on? I try to and it's hard. I think that's what faith is about. I go up and down. It doesn't sound like much of a commercial for being a Christian, but I have a faith that stays. We're people with doubts and I've had my share of experiences that keep me believing."

Simple abundance

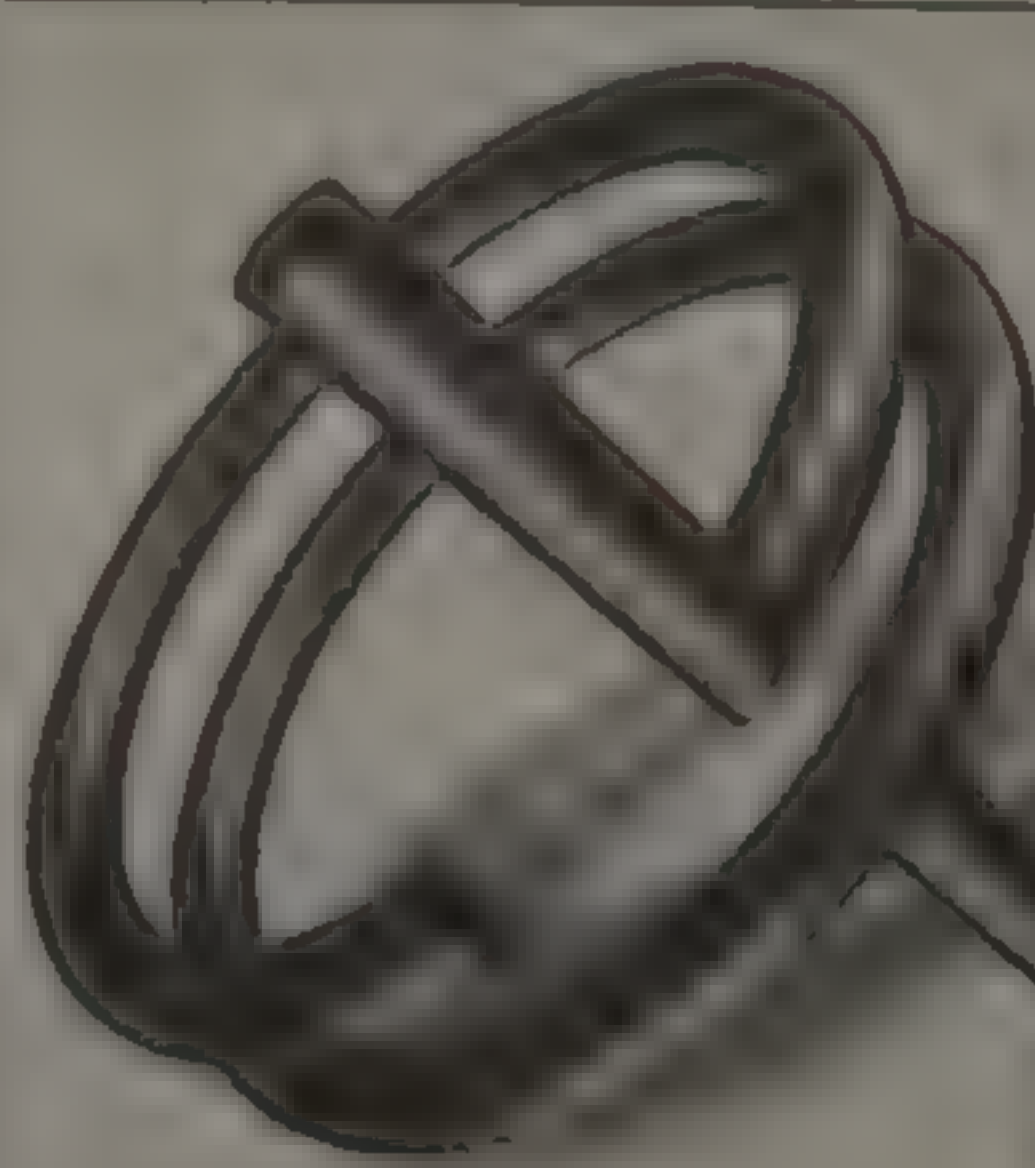
A couple of summers ago, Nikkel went to Ukraine with his wife Kimberly to find some long-lost relatives and came back with a new perspec-

tive on his comfortable life in Canada. "We went to this small little village in the middle of Ukraine," he recalls, "and lived with my wife's great-great-aunt. And these people were so poor. They can't get ahead at all. They live on the crops that they can get. Yet there was so much hope in these people. I felt they were lucky they were saved from the American mass-marketing machine, the images of beauty and what defines us as people by the media here. They had no concept. They had a very simple faith. I kind of idolized it a bit. They have such a simple life, and my life here is so cluttered. It's in the lyrics to 'I'm Strict and Formal Time'—'One day the veil will lift and with it my thoughts like the saints so broke who see the heart of God.' I think they see the heart of God more than we do here. Coming back from a life like that makes you re-evaluate your life. We tried to simplify. We sold our car, trying to slim things down. But it's still excess. The middle class here is still so decadent."

So if you lie awake at night wondering what it's all about, searching for answers about what the purpose of life might be and what difference could anything you do possibly make, maybe you'll find the answer in the examples of Buddha, Christ, Gandhi or in Bruce Cockburn's *Nothing But a Burning Light*. In Dale Nikkel, you'll likely find some of the same wonderings.

"I guess there's some answers here," he says, "but I think it's more questions than answers. Hopefully, people will relate to it. I write a lot out of a need to. It's kind of like my own journal-slash-therapy session where I meld my experiences into songs and hope some people will plug their own experiences into the songs and relate to them." ☐

Dale Nikkel CD Release Party
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Graveyard shift

Las Vegas Crypt Keepers exhume long-delayed new disc

by PHIL DUPERRON

For anyone not intimately familiar with gangster flicks, a Las Vegas crypt is a hole in the ground where you bury the dead. In the business partners are no longer to pull their weight.

Edmonton's Las Vegas Crypt Keepers aren't nearly as fearful as the name suggests. I'd be far more likely to succumb to hypothermia shivering out to their practice space than find myself being measured for a hole. Besides, they have so fear quickly turns to joy.

Five and a half years ago—and going on forever, says Jerzy Brienko, lunging up from behind his drum—the Las Vegas Crypt Keepers were out as a shtick band doing covers while wearing Elvis wigs. Now days of playing covers are behind them and so are the wigs. Brienko, Paul E. (a.k.a. "The Knife"), though absent for this interview, fronts the band. Matt Montana plays bass, while Bradley H. "Sureshot" and relative newcomer Steve Shagnetti, play guitars. Things have been pretty quiet for the Keepers lately because they've been putting together their new disc, only to have financial difficulties drag the process out for two long years. Not having a disc to flog on the road meant waiting to tour. "It's like opening up a store with nothing to sell," Shagnetti says about the frustrating hiatus.

The title of the band's first full-length disc, *Better Never Than Late*, seems ironic but apt, but the band assures me that was the working title all along—it just sounds more fitting now. The Keepers recorded the album with the help of Barry Allen at Edmonton's Homestead Recordings; it was mastered by Nick Blagona at Metropolis in Ontario. The Keepers say Homestead was the natural choice for analog recording, an old-school method that creates a warmer sound. "Digital sucks," says Sureshot. "We're a raw rock 'n' roll band. Digital is so glossy and smooth—it's like candy. When you listen to Black Sabbath's lo-fi sound, it really kicks ass." Shagnetti says working on a limited budget at a busy, well-equipped studio meant "revolving around people with money," but in the end, the band is "happy with the final product."

make a point. "Rock 'n' roll just isn't fun these days," says Shagnetti. "We love the attitude and the defiance, but it should be fun. It's a big, empty void when it comes to bands just having fun. Look at Creed. I'm not gonna say they suck, but they're always so serious—crack a smile, buddy! The industry is just looking for the song that will make millions, they're just looking for something to make teenaged girls cry. All those old hair metal bands

were singing about good times. When they sang about something deep, it was just a farce. Guys in spandex don't get broken hearts."

"They just get the clap," adds Sureshot.

At this point Brienko barks in for his kick at the can. "Everyone's just whining too much. Marilyn Manson takes his style too seriously to walk



Las Vegas Crypt Keepers

away from a show with a smile on your face. Nobody sings about dragons or demons anymore."

Although the Crypt Keepers are a long way from hairspray, make-up and spiral perms, they're still very slick looking. Their style lies midway between glam rock and punk, giving them a distinctive look, at least for Edmonton. "We're not anti-image," says Sureshot. "We're having fun with rock 'n' roll. We just like look-

ing good while we're doing it."

"A band is marketable with or without an image," says Shagnetti. "We enjoy the image. We definitely have one, but it's a fun image." He pauses, then adds, with a self-deprecating air, "You can't hold it against us for being good-looking." ☐

Las Vegas Crypt Keepers

With *Ozone Baby*, the *Ghettoblasters* and *Truth* • Red's • Fri, Feb 1

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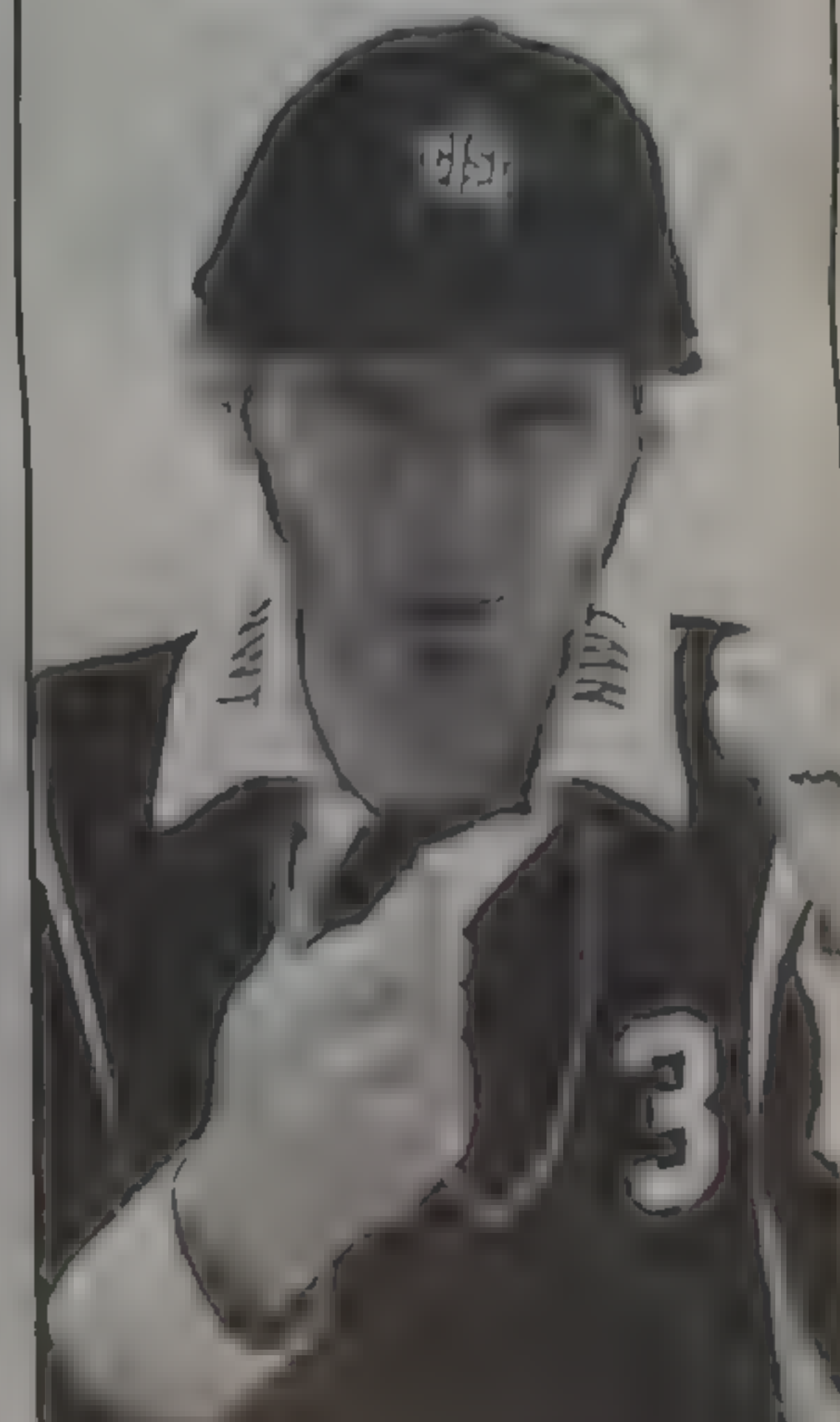
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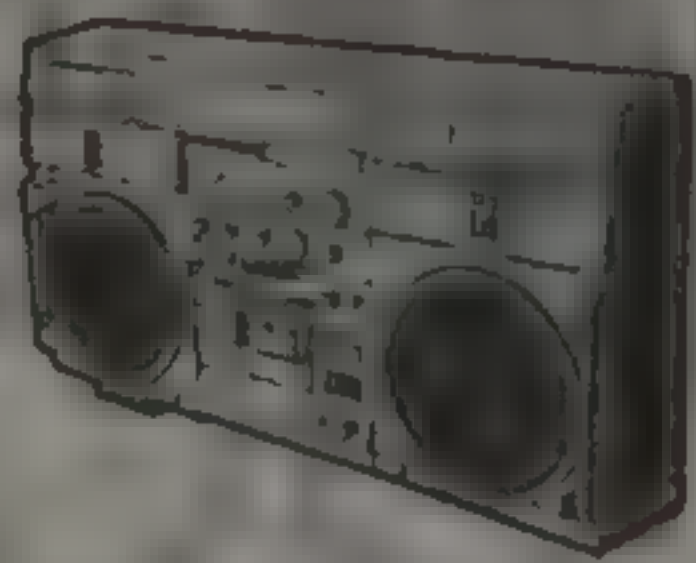
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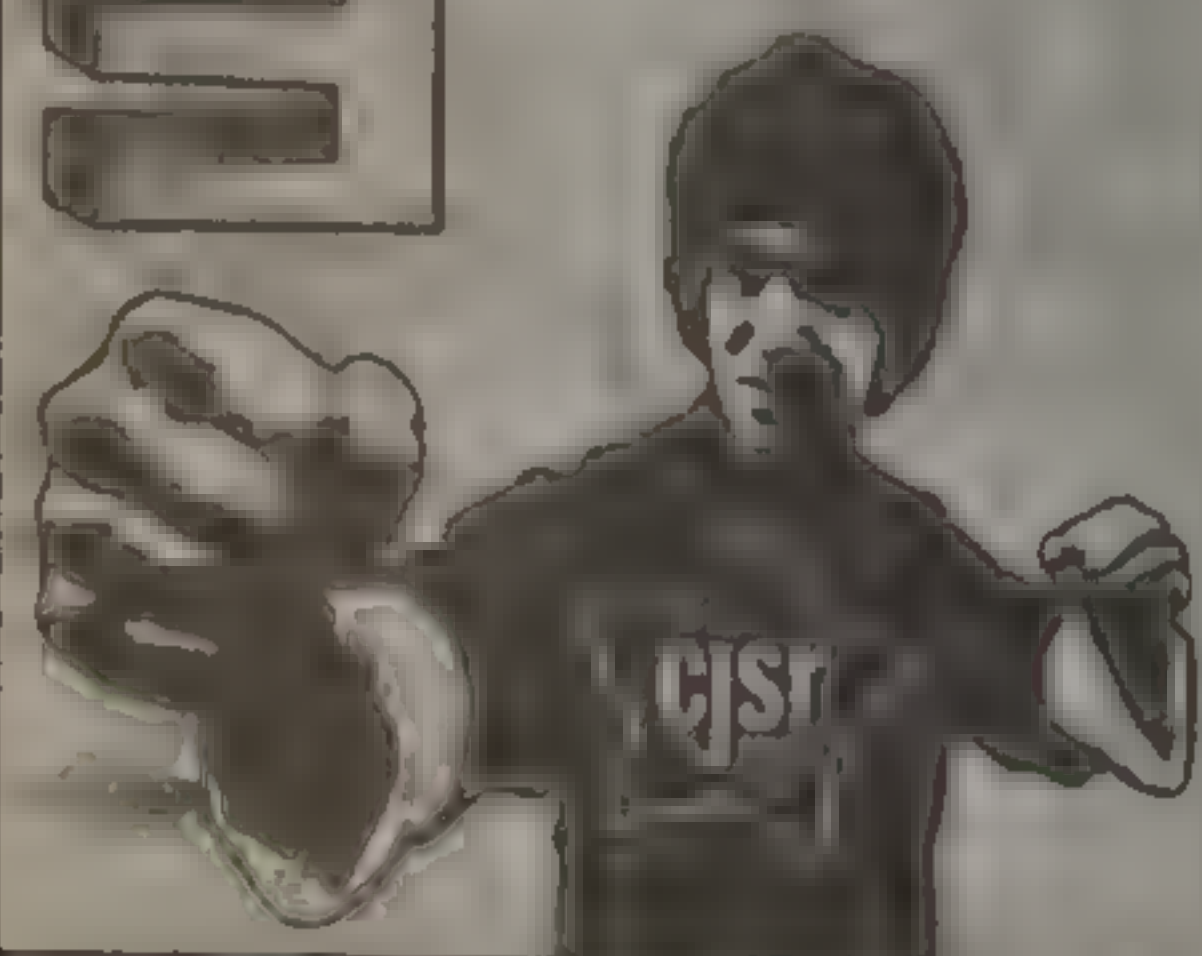
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HipHop/RnB/Soul/
Dancehall Reggae
Saturdays
12AM - 3AM



By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

Criminal records

There's no such thing as bad publicity. At least, that's how the saying goes. But when it comes to the entertainment industry, executives are learning that clichés aren't always accurate.

According to a recent study conducted by the Center for Media and Public Affairs, the trend of violence in the entertainment industry is steadily increasing. Not only is the violent content in music, television and movies on the rise, but violent acts in the private lives of those involved in these industries are increasing as well.

On Christmas day, R&B singer Keke Wyatt, 21, who had just released her

debut album, *Soul Sista*, on MCA/Universal Records, stabbed her husband five times during a domestic dispute. Rahmat Morton, who also doubles as Wyatt's manager, suffered stab wounds to the chest, arm, hands and back. Wyatt has since been charged with second-degree assault. If convicted, she faces 10 to 20 years in prison.

According to Jodi Taylor, the publicity and promotion co-ordinator for Universal Records Canada, it's a shame to see entertainers acting out in violent ways because those in the industry who are not following that path are being dragged down with those who are. But Taylor believes it's often the fans who drive celebrities to criminal means. She says the public has a hunger for dirt on their favourite celebrities. As a result, artists unintentionally become role models.

Despite the ongoing trend of celebrities getting in trouble with the law, Kevin "Jedi" Barton, the national urban music co-ordinator for Universal Music, says there is no direct connection between show business and violence, arguing that entertainers exercise free will and that the violent

acts they carry out are the results of human nature, not side effects of the entertainment industry. "I think people are people," he says. "If you were to walk into any courtroom tomorrow, you could probably find more correlation between poverty and crime."

Barton has plenty of experience in dealing with unruly artists thanks to his close business relationship with many of them. He says that public appearances and even tours are often cancelled due to legal restraints. At the end of the day, he adds, artists are the investments of their record labels. Some will make you rich, and some will make you wish you had never looked twice.

But for every career that has been ruined by criminal behaviour—Ike Turner, the abusive ex-husband of Tina, comes to mind—there's an artist whose career has been aided by a disorderly lifestyle. Case in point: convicted burglar Merle Haggard, whose 15-year jail sentence inspired many of his most popular songs.

Darryl Rodway, the chief executive editor of *Urbnet*, a Canadian-owned entertainment magazine, says negative actions by celebrities can

often equal positive results. "For celebrities, being in headlines is definitely easy publicity," Rodway says. "The media's always looking for dirt and dirt draws attention to the artist. According to Rodway, when there's violence, people take notice. Sometimes the drama draws more attention than the music itself."

And that's when problems arise for artists. When the publicity shines on the artist and the music careers become shortened, Rodway says. As well, celebrities' actions frequently influence their fans. Those who are "weak-minded," Rodway says, will try to live out the lifestyles and situations depicted by entertainers. "The bottom line," he says, "is that this world is full of quacks, and when quacks start making crazy music, people follow them."

Rodway adds that music isn't the only outlet to blame for having a negative effect on people and says other forms of entertainment should also be held responsible. "Books can influence people," he says. "A book influenced the death of John Lennon. Not a movie, not a song, but a book." ☐

Urb Weekly

BACKROOM VODKA BAR—10324 Whyte Ave. • WED: The Forum, with Robert Alan, DJ Calus and guests—FEB 13: Miguel Migs (NYC) • THU: Deja Vu, house with guests • FRI: Pilot Episode, with Simon Locke and Tripswitch and guests • SAT: Flava, hip-hop with weekly guests

BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE—10425 Whyte Ave., 439-1082 • TUE: Digital Underdog, hip hop with Sonny Grimezz, C-Sekshun, and

Megaforce • SUN: What The Hell, downtempo beats with DJ Tryptomene and Spilt Milk

CALIENTE NIGHTCLUB—10815 Jasper Avenue, 425-0850 • FRI: Funktion Fridays, urban with resident DJ Invinceable and guests • SAT: guest DJs • SUN: Ladies' Night, with DJ Invinceable

CLIMAXX AFTERHOURS—10148-105 St.

• (780) 425 2582 • THU: guest DJs • FRI: Thunder Dave, Slav, Mr. Anderson, LP • SAT: Wil Danger, Donovan, Protege, Ryan Mason

CRISTAL LOUNGE—10336 Jasper Ave., info 426-7521 • FRI: Future Funk Fridays, drum 'n' bass with Deegree, Skoolee and Phatcat • SAT: Urban Saturdays, with DJ Spin-cycle, DJ Invinceable and guests

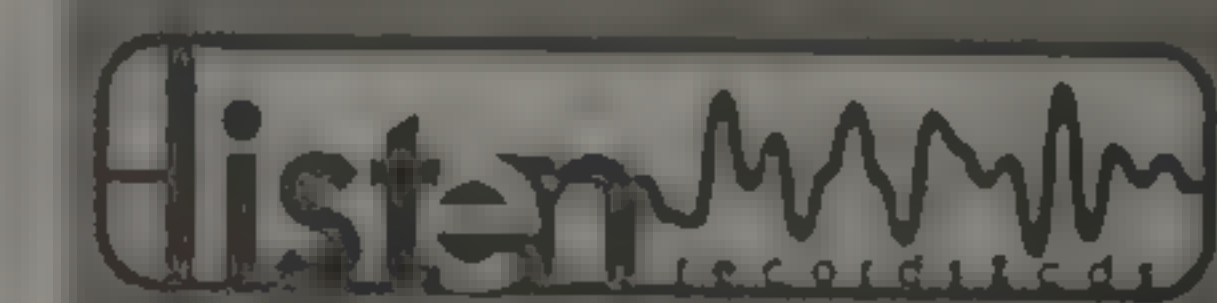
DEVLIN'S—10507-82 Ave., info 437-7489 • SUN: beats with DJ Calus and Robert Allen

EUPHORIA—4605 - 50 Ave., Red Deer, AB (late night/after hours) • FRI-SAT: deep house, trance and hard house with residents Sese, Travisty and Devilish

EVAR AFTER/G-SPOT—10148-105 St. (late night/after hours) • WED: Ladies Night, with Goza • THU: Rewind with Slav and guests • FRI: resident DJs James Gregory, Tomek, plus guests • SAT: Infinity, with the Starving DJs (Tristan Newton, Vaas, Diazo)

FLY—10203-104 St., 421-0992 • FRI: house with Dr. Yvo • SAT: house and R&B with Alvaro

HALO—10538-Jasper Ave, 423-HALO • WED: house with Dirty Darren Pockett • THU: Soul What?, with Tanner and Echo • FRI: How Sweet It is, hip-hop, house and R&B with DJ Echo, Alvaro • SAT: For Those Who Know... with Junior Brown, Amedeo, and Ryan Mason • SUN: As Good As It Gets, house with Andy Pockett • THU JAN 31: Junior Sanchez (NYC)



LISTEN
Hardcover, drum 'n' bass with Celcius, Deadly, Ghetto F/X, J.Me. J., and guests

RED'S—Phase 3, West Edmonton Mall • MON: Mike's Mondays • TUES: Toonie Tuesdays • SAT: Saturday Night Party, with Kenny K • SUN: Hypno Sundays

SAVOY—10401 Whyte Ave, 438-0373 • FRI: Indie Rock, with DJs Rich and Shanté • SAT: Beats, with Ariel & Roel • SUN: Pop, with Deja DJ

SQUIRES—10505-82 Ave, downstairs • MON: Local Motive with rotating hosts El Waterboy, Genome, Kryptokane and g

SUBLIME (late night/after hours)—10147-104 St., Bsm. 905-8024 • FRI: Remedy, with rotating residents Da Ryan, Donovan, S2 • SAT: house with M Mulatto and Locks Garant

SUITE 69—8232-103 Street, upstairs • SUN: Infusion, with DJs Diabolik and Headz

THERAPY (late night/after hours)—10028-102 Street (alley entrance), info 903-7666 • FRI: Upst

IRON HORSE—8101-103 Street, info 438-1907 • WED: Freeflow, house with Johnny Five • FRI-SAT: Alix DJ

LUSH/THE REV—10030A-102 St., 424-2851 • WED: Main-The Classic, retro with DJ Loki; Velvet—progressive house with Ariel & Roel • THU: Lush—Trauma, drum 'n' bass & jungle with residents Phatcat, Deegree, Skoolee and guests—Jan. 31: Celcius 101—Ghetto F/X • FRI: Main-Bump 'n' Hustle, house with Remo Williams and Bobby Torpedo and rotating guests—FEB 8: Chem Brothers Exclusive Release Party, with DJ David Stone; Velvet—Underground, alternating native & retro with Eddie Lunchpail • SAT: Turbo, progressive trance and house with alternating residents and guests—FEB 2: The New Deal (Toronto), Bobby Torpedo, Alvaro; Velvet: Forties 'n' Nines, with R and Sundog

MAJESTIK—10123-112 St. • THU: Hard night with residents Tripswitch, Sweet and guests • FRI: Hard House with residents Crunchie, Jaw-Dee, Charlie Mayhem • SAT: hard house with DJ Crunchie—FEB 2: Slipmatt (UK)

NEW CITY COMPOUND—10167-112 St. 413-4578 • TUE: Likwid Lounge—Stellar, B Pop, Mod and indie Rock, with DJ Bluejay • Travy D • WED: Suburbs—Atmosphere school, soul, house and hip hop, with Curt and Slacks • FRI: FEB 8: DJ Fado (Phoenix), Spilt Milk • SAT: Suburbs • days Suck, with DJ Blue Jay and Nik Rofe • SUN: Suburbs—SChocolate Sundaes, w Hand Luc, Remo Williams and guests

PARLIAMENT—10551 Whyte Ave • SAT: Hardcover, drum 'n' bass with Celcius, Deadly, Ghetto F/X, J.Me. J., and guests

RED'S—Phase 3, West Edmonton Mall • MON: Mike's Mondays • TUES: Toonie Tuesdays • SAT: Saturday Night Party, with Kenny K • SUN: Hypno Sundays

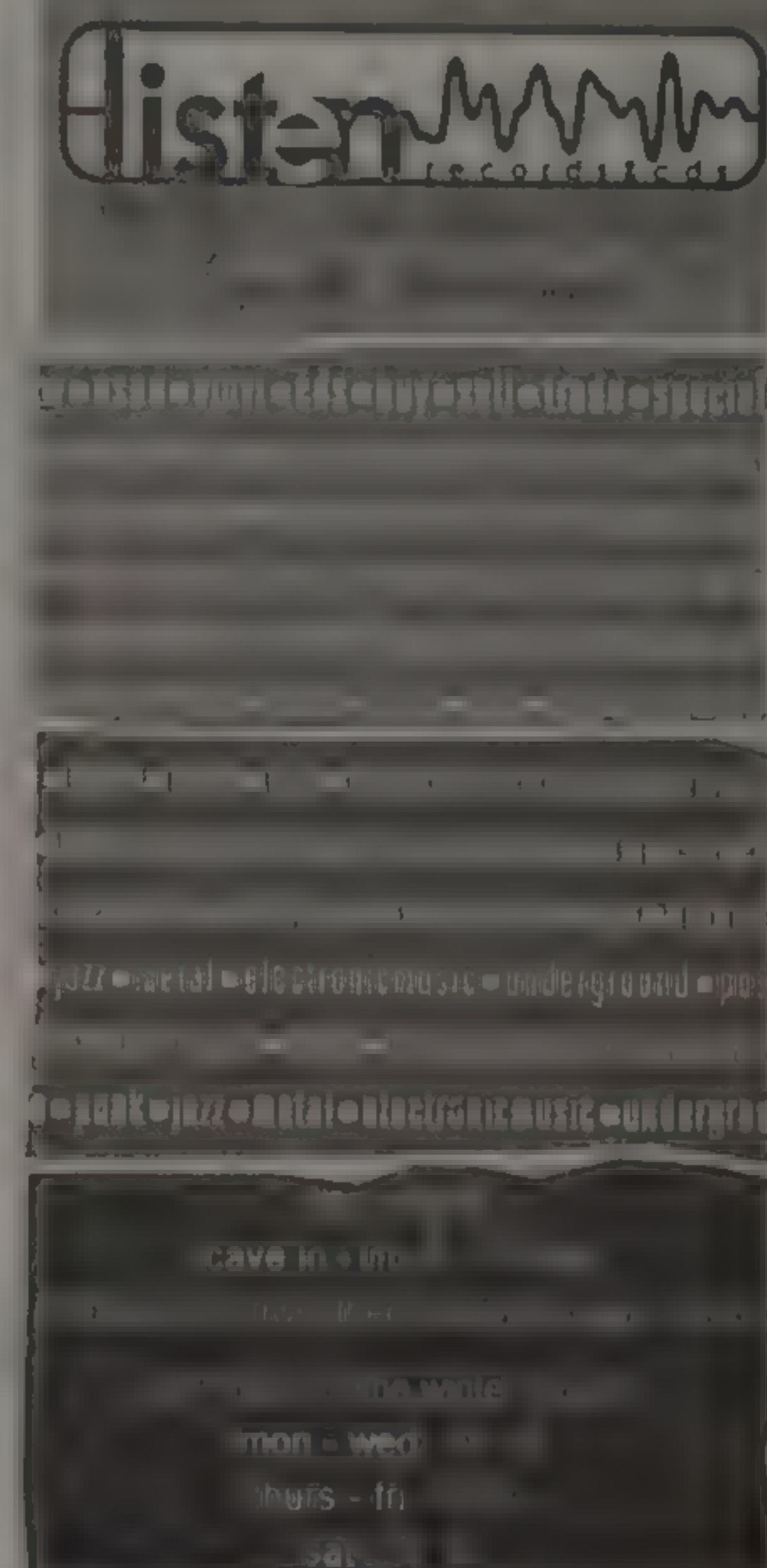
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THERAPY (late night/after hours)—10028-102 Street (alley entrance), info 903-7666 • FRI: Upst Greg Wynn, Cool Hand Luc, Tripswitch, Bunker—Saki & Spanky, Tiff-Slip, Ar Donahue • SAT: Upstairs—Dragon, S Alias; Bunker—Gundam, Bobby Torped



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Some of it is raucous (e.g., the Ramones' "Judy Is a Punk"), but most is luminously depressing stuff like Elliot Smith's "Needle in the Hay," Nick Drake's heartbreaking "Fly" and the two tracks by Nico (the spiritual kin of Gwyneth Paltrow's raccoon-eyed Margot Tenenbaum), all complemented by Mark Mothersbaugh's gentle celeste-and-harp-laden score. You heard me, Coltrane—buy it now. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

EDISON WOODS (ENDEARING)

In a modern world where ambient experimental music that doesn't employ electronics has become the exception and not the rule, this New York-based combo offers a breath of fresh air.

With influences in both the post-rock (think Rachels) and the classical worlds, Edison Woods mixes cellos, pianos, understated percussion and the wispy, angelic voice of Julia Frodahl in a way that comes off sounding more like a soundscape than a collection of eight individual songs; it's as if the song breaks are put onto the CD more as a novelty than a necessity. Of course, much of this music was written for film; before the Winnipeg-based Endearing label picked it up, this music was independently released by the band after being used in a documentary called *Transitions to Triumph*.

This is not music to uplift you, either: the cello strains are mournful; the percussion, while quiet, is unsettling, and the piano adds a touch of eeriness to the whole package. It's a challenging work, but when the layers are peeled back after repeated plays, the listener will be rewarded with a feeling of dread, not joy. ★★★★★ —STEVEN SANDOR

TRI-CONTINENTAL LIVE (TRADITION AND MODERNE)

How fitting it is that Tri-Continental—the name Bill Bourne, Lester Quitzau and Madagascar Slim assume for their collaborative creations—have released a live album. The band, after all, was born on the stage, an unlikely cross-border musical bond forged between a couple of guys from Edmonton and a friend who came to Canada from Madagascar. It was on the festival circuit that Tri-Continental honed its unique weave of Quitzau's blues, Bourne's uncanny rhythmic sensibilities and Slim's fat, warm (and phat) African electric guitar. And it's with a live CD from the partnership we're reminded that, like three-cheese lasagna, good things do indeed come in threes.

Many of the tracks on this double album start rather reservedly, perhaps so as not to startle the concert audience in Bremen—Germans not being known as the world's most emotionally outgoing people. But the songs build. And build. And build. Whether they're doing a classic blues number like Muddy Waters's "Honey Bee," a Bourne original like the epic "Ole Buffalo" or a traditional folk song like "Worried Man," Tri-Continental's arrangements sound like true tapestries, each layer of guitar and vocals intertwined and inseparable from the

piece as a whole. Standouts include Quitzau's "Precious Love" and Bourne's "The House," which morphs into an extended blues jam to close out the second disc. Tri-Continental knows it takes more than a standard radio-length song to tell a story and take your listeners on a journey, so most of the tracks on *Live* weigh in at eight or nine minutes long. Make the time; it's worth it. ★★★★★ —DAN RUBINSTEIN

SHOCORE DEVIL ROCK DISCO (LINUS)

Besides having one of the best titles I've heard in years, this funky metal disc from Vancouver's Shocore features some damned fine songs, even if it falls a bit short of being great. "Bonecracker," the album's leadoff track, is good and catchy—and while it's not exactly original sounding, it's easy to figure out why it got so much radio play. It's the most typical song on the disc; it's only when Shocore strays farther from the formula of hip-hop-laden metal tunes that they really shine. Lead singer Cory White used to play in DDT, a band I think deserved far more recognition than they ever got, and it sounds like he's in good company. With 10 adrenaline-fueled offerings covering a broad range of styles, *Devil Rock Disco* makes for a good listen. There's some interesting layering of sounds, giving it a polished, well-produced sound that sounds fresh and edgy without going overboard. ★★★★★ —PHIL DUPERRON

VARIOUS ARTISTS THE SOURCE PRESENTS: HIP-HOP HITS VOL. 5 (DEF JAM/ UNIVERSAL)

In case you didn't buy any of the top-selling albums of 2001, Def Jam and *The Source* have teamed up to compile the most popular songs from each one onto a single CD. If you're a regular Much-Music viewer, follow 106th and Park's daily top 10 and bite your nails in anticipation of mainstream radio's "urban mix," *Hip-Hop Hits Vol. 5* is for you.

Multi-platinum songs like D-12's "Purple Pills" (not "Hills"), Missy Elliot's "Get Ur Freak On" and Ja Rule and J-Lo's "I'm Real" lead the lineup and should be enough to put *Hip-Hop Hits* under the beds of suburban teens across North America. But in case those songs don't float your boat, there's more... much more. Foxy Brown and Spragga Benz are featured on "Oh Yeah," a song whose sole purpose seems to be determining the degree of Fox-Boogie Brown's hood-dom. As well, Cash Money Millionaires' Project Bitc...

Um, listen, I can't do this anymore. I really tried to be fair, but there's absolutely no reason for this compilation to exist, except to further pollute the already oversaturated hip-hop market. Don't fans of these artists already own these songs already? In these days of CD burners and rampant bootlegging, compilations need to be more than just popular songs randomly thrown together. Def Jam should have taken a lesson from other compilations and gotten a DJ to take some of these hits and used them as the basis for a more commercially focussed CD. ★★ —SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

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DJ LOGIC THE ANOMALY (KNOX DISC/ROPEADOPE)

Turntablists always like to say how they're constantly on the hunt for exciting new sounds, but few of them back up those claims with the skill, the intelligence and the true eclecticism of DJ Logic. On various tracks on his new disc, *The Anomaly*, Logic incorporates the sinuous, Wayne Shorter-like saxophone of core Project Logic musician Jeremy Benjamin, the funky organ and clavinet playing of John Medeski, the multi-instrumentalist chaos of Living Colour idea man Vernon Reid, the Kronos Quartet-like playing of Israeli violinist Miri Ben-Ari and the powerhouse vocals of opera singer Marie Claire.

There's not the slightest hint of pretentiousness about Logic's restless musical borrowings, either; Logic collaborates with his guest artists instead of merely sampling a catchy riff or two from them. ("Soul Kissing," which features Ben-Ari as well as tabla player Ravi Shankar, Sting percussionist Mino Cinelu and vibraphonist Brian Carrot, takes its name from Logic's theory that making music together is "like having our souls kiss.") DJ Logic's whole approach to music makes perfect sense to me; he's pushing the boundaries of electronica the way Miles Davis pushed the boundaries of jazz, and if he keeps it up, Logic could very well come up with the turntablist equivalent of *Kind of Blue*. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS (HOLLYWOOD)

I've seen *The Royal Tenenbaums* three times already, and one of the things I come to admire most about it—aside from its painstaking production design, the richly conceived backstory that provides for every single character and the endless array of spot-on comic performances—is director Wes Anderson's uncanny ability for choosing music that matches up perfectly (and often, unexpectedly) with his characters' emotions. Who else would think of accompanying a scene in which a rascally ex-lawyer surreptitiously steals his estranged grandfather's Bob Dylan's "Wigwam"? Or showing us a long-lost falcon returning to its owner while the gentle tones of Velvet Underground's "Stephanie" play on the soundtrack?

Even if you've made the biggest mistake of your life and haven't seen the film, *The Royal Tenenbaums* soundtrack is a gorgeous, stand-alone collection of innovative pop and rock

Vengeance is mine, saith the Count

The Count of Monte Cristo has too much buckle, not enough swash

BY DAN RUBINSTEIN

After 13 years of incarceration in the hellish island prison Chateau D'if, with the help of a wise old inmate who teaches him everything from swordsmanship to Economics 101 and gives him a map revealing the whereabouts of a secret hoard of treasure, Edmond Dantes (Jim Caviezel) pulls off a daring jailbreak. He plunges off a cliff into the Mediterranean and swims through the night to the nearest land, only to wash up on a beach where a gang of smugglers is

camped out. They're trying to decide how to deal with one of their own who's been caught pocketing more than his share of loot. The leader of the outlaws wants Dantes to engage in a knife fight to the death with Jacopo (*Traffic's* Luis Guzman), with the survivor (re)joining the marauders. Jacopo, the boss warns Dantes, is the deadliest knife fighter he knows. "You should get out more," responds Dantes.

Such is the way director Kevin Reynolds handles *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Alexandre Dumas's classic tale of a man consumed by revenge. As written, the book is a rollicking adventure story crammed with swashbuckling, desolate rocky outcrops, lavish country manors and cold-hearted betrayal. But the screenplay penned by Jay Wolpert, who currently serves as the first pro-

ducer on *The Price Is Right* and cites his role as Diane Keaton's gynecologist in the *Father of the Bride II* among his top acting credits, infuses the action with a plethora of incongruous Schwarzenegger-style one-liners (including that witty quip Dantes delivers on the beach despite the fact that minutes earlier he was so tired he was passed out face-first in the sand—and that he's just escaped from more than a dozen years in prison, the first six of which he spent in solitary confinement with only an annual whipping from the warden keeping him in touch with his fellow man).

Then again, perhaps Dantes's ill-fitting wisecracking is consistent with Reynolds's approach. Although not quite as schizophrenic as blatant star vehicles like *Legends of the Fall*, which abruptly jumped from cowboy epic to mobster movie to war report, *The Count of Monte Cristo*



Don't fence me in: Guy Pearce and Jim Caviezel cut a wide swathe through *The Count of Monte Cristo*

never decides what kind of film it wants to be. It begins with the veneer of a pseudo-sophisticated

period drama, then dashes off into the action/adventure genre before succumbing to the trappings of the prison escape flick.

The bad Guy

Ultimately, Reynolds's and Wolpert subterfuge notwithstanding, *The Count of Monte Cristo* cannot dodge Dumas's primary theme: revenge, and how an unchecked thirst for vengeance will render meaningless the motives behind such a quest. The plot that leads us here is relatively simple. Dantes, effectively but un-extraordinarily played by Caviezel (who starred opposite J-Lo in *Angel Eyes*), is a commoner promoted to ship's captain, is happily in love with his beautiful fiancée (newcomer Dagmara Dominczyk) and has a watch-my-back best friend, Fernand Mondego, played by *Memento's* Guy Pearce. (Hopefully he'll forget this one.) Mondego, however, is the son of a wealthy count and secretly covets Dantes's success, not to mention his girlfriend. (How these guys ever became friends is beyond me.) Mondego conspires against his boyhood pal, a betrayal that sends Dantes to the infamous Chateau D'if, from which he eventually escapes and concocts an elaborate scheme—transforming himself into the mysterious Count of Monte Cristo—so he can deposit caps in the asses of those who dissed him.

None of the characters really stands out, other than Luis Guzman's Jacopo. As Dantes's indebted sidekick, Guzman delivers most of the best lines in a film that's teeming with visual treats and mildly engaging action sequences but short on intellectual stimulation. Or almost forgot the performance by the legendary Richard Harris as Abbe Faria, the elderly inmate who bestows so much philosophy and wisdom upon Dantes. But Harris's scenes, like the film overall, are forgettable and predictable. Read the book instead. ☐

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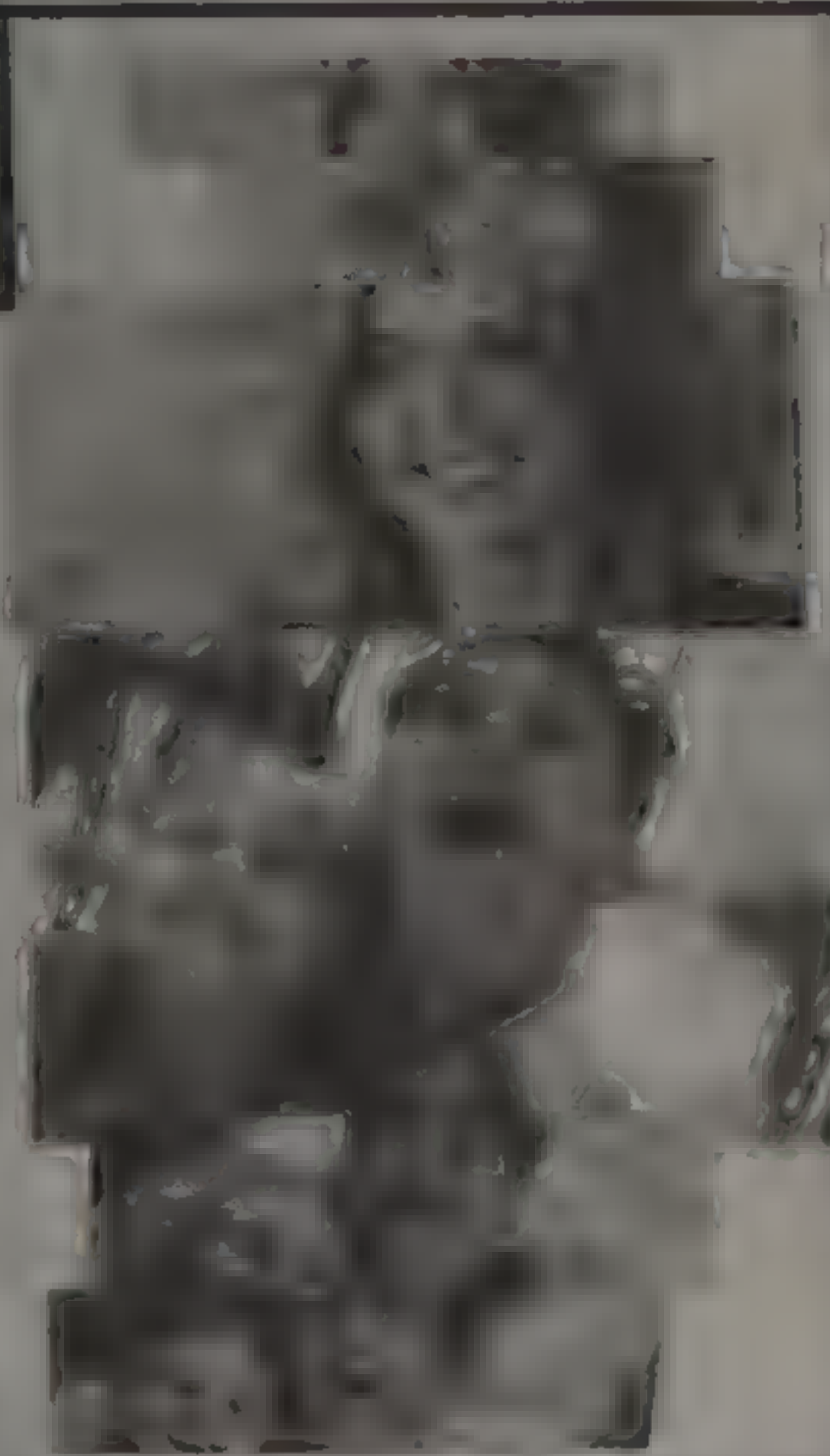
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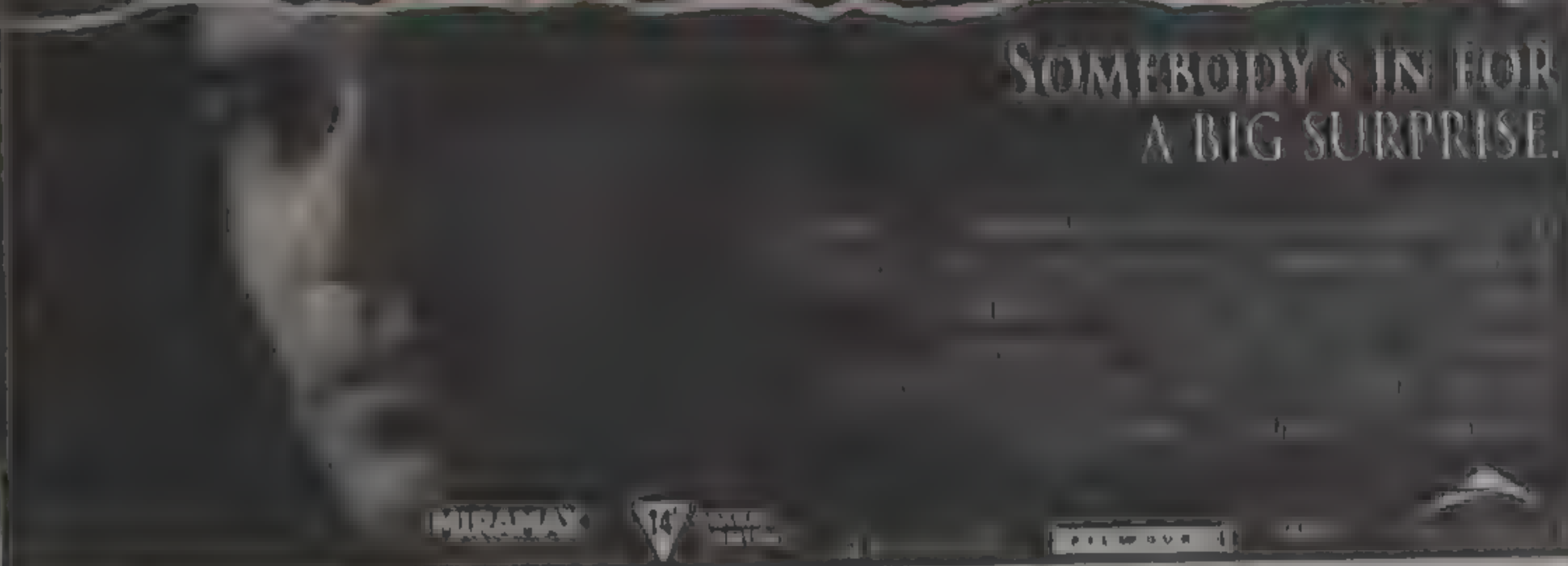
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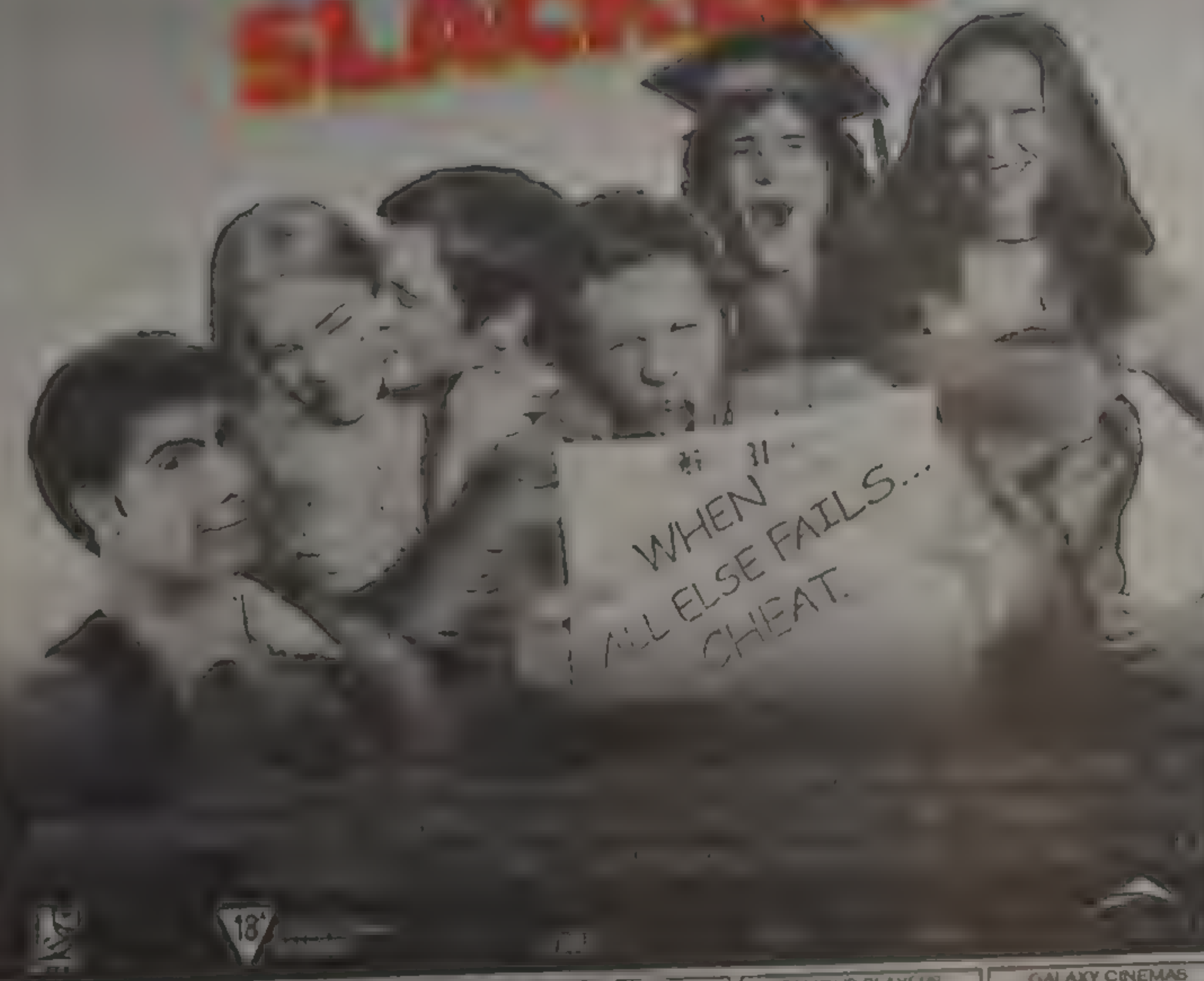
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Emotion



Romeo and Soviet

A Russian
mail-order bride
wreaks post-Cold
War havoc in
Birthday Girl

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

You can hardly blame John (Ben Chaplin), the hero of the offbeat new romantic thriller *Birthday Girl*, for resorting to desperate measures in his search for a girlfriend. While he's not bad-looking, in a nebbishy, buttoned-down sort of way, he's also very shy, very British—and his habit of spending his evenings alone in his ant-infested house after a long day of working at the local bank has pretty much taken him out of sexual circulation. But as he drives to the airport to meet Nadia, the Russian mail-order bride he has sent for through an Internet website calling itself

"From Russia With Love," even John seems to be saying to himself, "Nothing good can possibly come of this." And when he gets his first sight of Nadia—as played by the lithe, voracious-looking Nicole Kidman, her hair dyed brown, her head towering several inches above Chaplin's—you realize that this poor sap has bitten off a lot more than he can possibly chew.

Birthday Girl starts out as a subdued sexual comedy; John and Nadia (who, it turns out, doesn't speak a word of English) spend a few awkward, timid days together before Nadia, apparently fearful that John is having second thoughts about their relationship and may send her back to Russia, seduces him into letting her stay. (Her discovery of John's secret stash of pornography, including what

appears to be a complete run of the respected scholarly journal *Hog-Tied Bitches*, helps her efficiently zero in on John's particular kinks.) But just when John begins to think Nadia might be his dream girl after all—hey, who cares about conversation when your partner can tie a good square knot?—a pair of untrustworthy-looking Russians named Yuri and Andrei show up at his doorstep, claiming to be Nadia's cousins. (Bizarrely enough, Yuri and Andrei are played by two French guys, Amélie's Mathieu Kassovitz and Vincent Cassel, who Kassovitz directed in *Hate* and *The Crimson Rivers*.)

It's around this point that *Birthday Girl* turns into a thriller—before you know it, John is nervously cleaning out the vault of his own bank, dodging the police by driving down back country roads in his extremely conspicuous, broken-down orange automo-

bile and trying to figure out if Nadia actually loves him or has simply been playing him for sucker all along.

Which way is the John?

Birthday Girl was directed by Jez Butterworth (who co-wrote the script with his brother Tom), a British writer who made a name for himself with his play *Mojo*, an edgy hybrid of *Reservoir Dogs*, *Crays* and Harold Pinter that the Theatre Network staged here about three years ago. *Birthday Girl* is softer, quirkier, less categorized creation—and also a less memorable one. I think that's largely the result of the Butterworths' failure to give us much reason to care about John, who, for all his awkward fumbling around her, plays very little emotional tenderness toward Nadia. Indeed, whose treatment of her becomes extremely exploitative. There's an unpleasantness at the centre of this film that the Butterworths never quite dispel or reconcile—there's nothing wrong with creating a movie in which everybody uses everybody else, or asking a lot from the audience and expecting them to start reading the cues to find true love.

Birthday Girl is pretty disappointing, but the cast is solid—especially Kassovitz as the con man who genuinely seems to want his victims not to have any hard feelings against him even after he ruins their lives; and Kidman, who always has a certain sense of grace and unknowability in her eyes, even though she seems to display teary eyes, a red nose, a cut lip, a bruised body in every single scene of the film. Impressively, she delivers at least half her performance in Russian, although I have no idea how skillfully she executes this feat. Anyway, she probably doesn't do any worse than the Frenchmen. ☺

Birthday Girl

Directed by Jez Butterworth
Starring Ben Chaplin, Nicole Kidman

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The tales of Mothman

Spookiness
bounds in eerie,
Gere-y Mothman
Prophecies

BY KEVIN MAGER

Directed by Mark Pellington (*Arlington Road*) and based on the nonfiction book of the same title by John Keel, *The Mothman Prophecies* depicts a series of ambiguous, inexplicable and chilling actual events as seen through the eyes of "John Klein," (Richard Gere), a noted journalist writing for the *Washington Post*. The film opens with a sequence that contrasts the harsh environment of the post press offices (where Gere is lit brightly but coldly, our view of his

face obscured by desktop computer monitors or desk lamps) with the warmth of Klein's home life with wife Mary (Debra Messing). The happy couple finds the perfect house in the perfect neighbourhood and welcomes their new purchase with much talk about how perfect their lives have become in such a short time. Alas, when Mary takes the wheel and they head home, trouble leaps in front of their car, sending it careening into a tree and setting up a nicely stylized shot of Messing's head impacting on her side window.

Cut to Gere exhausted at her hospital bedside. What had she seen in the street? How could he have missed it? An MRI brain scan discovers a brain tumour and doctors conclude that Mary was hallucinating. Now, with producers Tom Rosenberg, Gary Lucchesi and Ted

Tannebaum's names in the credits, you could be forgiven for expecting another cancer drama like *Autumn in New York* to be in the works here, but rest easy: this time, Gere's love interest dies 10 minutes into the action instead of lingering around for the entire two hours.

Mulder, he said

Later, the melancholy, driven Klein finds himself lost in Point Pleasant, Virginia, where he is stunned to encounter one person after another who has had encounters similar to Mary's. Interestingly, Pellington resists the temptation to give us a clear, concrete image of the mysterious apparition who's causing all this mischief. Instead, all we have to guide us into these people's fears are impressionistic drawings and blurry cinematography. The tactic pays off to a certain degree, but after a cer-



tain point Pellington stops raising the horror-movie stakes and concentrates instead on the much less intriguing relationship between Klein and Connie Parker (Laura Linney), Point Pleasant's finest. As Klein, Gere has lost some of his customary vacuity, but I couldn't say that his was a powerful performance—perhaps because it owes so much to the Mulder/Scully template from *The X-Files*; he's convinced of everything, while she steadfastly refuses to believe.

The Mothman Prophecies is like *The Sixth Sense*, minus the cute and cuddly, dead-but-lovable kids. Most interesting to me is the fascination these two films share with the existence of a paranormal hyper-reality parallel to our own; both films try to take us beyond the shocking exterior of the unexplained in order to show us the warm fuzzy feeling we could share if we'd just accept that we're not alone in this chaotic world. Demons are good for us, damn it!

Because Keel's book was written about (supposedly) actual sightings and harrowing encounters that occurred during the mid- to late '60s in the real-life Point Pleasant, *The Mothman Prophecies* can't realistically provide a conclusive solu-

tion to the mystery of the Mothman; we can only say, once we've seen it, that we know the reason for its urgency. What I can say, however, is that Pellington's directorial techniques are intriguing. His previous experimental video work possesses a convoluted, appealing vision that I hope to see more of—and the opening credit sequence he's come up with for *Mothman* is the best I've seen since David Fincher's *Seven* or David Cronenberg's *Crash*. **D**

The Mothman Prophecies

Directed by Mark Pellington •

Starring Richard Gere, Laura Linney,

Will Patton and Debra Messing •

Now playing

Like a virgin

A Walk to Remember
forgets to include
conflict, depth, sex

BY CATHERINE WALSH

I believe it is possible to make a movie about teenagers that is moving, smart, funny and true. Examples of this rare phenomenon include *Heathers*, *Say Anything*, *Some Kind of Wonderful* and the more recent *October Sky*. *A Walk to Remember* sets out to make a sweet teenage love story but quickly gets mired down in its shallow characters and watered-down, conflict-free plot.

Landon Carter (Shane West) leaves his small-town school. Leading the popular crowd in their revies (drinking, making out and mocking the less popular), he lands a heap of trouble after an initiation prank goes wrong. Landon's punishment: doing janitorial work, tutoring an underprivileged student and, inexplicably, playing the lead in the school musical. He meets Jamie Sullivan (Mandy Moore), the Bible-toting, soft-spoken, definitely uncool minister's daughter. After Landon chooses Jamie over the cool crowd (in front of the whole school!), they go on a date where they indulge in stick-on tattoos and go for dinner and dancing under the stars at what appears to be a retirement home. Of course, young love is never without turmoil, and Jamie is desperate not to reveal the secret she carries that could tear them apart forever. Trust me, you won't be surprised.

This heavily soundtracked movie lies on melodramatic music and slick cuts to tell its story. There are many nearly interesting moments in the film, such as when Landon finally reaches the student he's been tutoring when Jamie begins to

crack under the taunts of the other students. But everything is immediately resolved as we are rushed through to the next scene and a new issue is presented and immediately resolved. All the stereotypes are there—the token black friend who tries to bring a funkified air to the proceedings, the blonde cheerleaders turning cartwheels on the lawn of the school. Even when Landon's ex-girlfriend decides to exact revenge on Jamie for stealing her man, it's not a big deal. Why? Because there are no conflicts. Even though the film supposedly portrays what is perhaps the cruelest time of human existence—i.e., high school—none of the characters are ever less than passively-aggressively supportive of each other. Worse, there is never any doubt that everything will be just fine.

been updated to the present day for the film, but the story retains a nostalgic, sentimental attitude toward growing up that quickly becomes cloyingly saccharine. The longest uninterrupted scene in the film is Mandy Moore's performance in the school musical—cut like a music video, it's an endless montage of superimposed images of Mandy Moore singing to a camera that revolves around her. Moore does have a certain amount of onscreen charm and she certainly can sing—we find that out within the first five minutes of the movie. But as a vehicle for anyone, the film is entirely forgettable, save that it begs the question: how cool is a cool crowd that has a lengthy secret handshake? **D**

Sparks and recreation

Underneath this movie's flab, there are a lot of interesting issues that could have been explored: single-parent families, peer pressure, the frustration of living in a small town. But by trying to cram in every detail of Nicholas Sparks's source novel, the action alternates between a slow drag (seven musical montage sequences) and frenetically paced plot development. Sparks's book, which was set in the 1950's, has

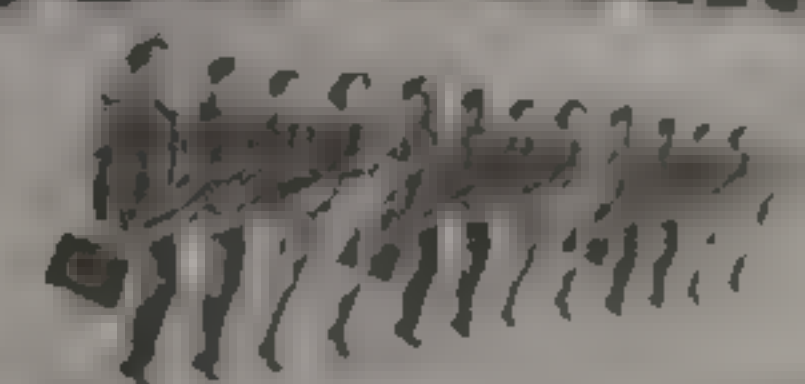


Mandy Moore and Shane West set off Sparks in *A Walk to Remember*

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FILMWEEKLY

NEW THIS WEEK

Birthday Girl (CO, FP) Nicole Kidman, Ben Chaplin, Vincent Cassel and Mathieu Kassovitz star in *Mojo* writer/director Jez Butterworth's edgy romantic comedy about an Englishman who gets into more trouble than he bargained for when he orders a Russian mail-order bride over the Internet.

Mau Mau Sex Sex (M) Director Ted Bonniitt's affectionate documentary portrait of legendary exploitation movie producers Dan Sonney and David Friedman, their colourful careers as renegade free-speech advocates and their decades-long friendship. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Feb 1-4, 7 and 9pm*

Slackers (CO, FP) Jason Schwartzman, Devon Sawa, James King and Laura Prepon star in director Dewey Nicks's teen comedy about a geeky college student who blackmails a popular classmate into helping him woo the most popular girl on campus.

The Swan (EFS) Grace Kelly, Alec Guinness and Louis Jourdan star in *Gilda* director Charles Vidor's sophisticated 1956 comedy about a beautiful but aloof princess who finds herself attracted to her younger brothers' handsome tutor even as her mother plays matchmaker for her with a visiting crown prince. Based on the play by Ferenc Molnar. *Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, Feb 4, 8pm*

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Ali (CO) Will Smith, Michael Michele, Jon Voight, Jamie Foxx and Jada Pinkett Smith star in *The Insider* director Michael Mann's film about boxer Cassius Clay, his rise to fame during the 1960s, his refusal to fight in Vietnam and his eventual emergence as pop culture icon Muhammad Ali.

Amélie (P) Audrey Tautou and Mathieu Kassovitz star in *The City of Lost Children* director Jean-Pierre Jeunet's whimsical, wildly imaginative fable about a lonely young Parisian woman who begins secretly performing good deeds for the unhappy people in her neighbourhood. In French with English subtitles.

A Beautiful Mind (CO, FP) Russell Crowe,

Jennifer Connelly, Ed Harris and Paul Bettany star in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* director Ron Howard's uplifting biopic about John Nash Jr., the Nobel Prize-winning mathematician whose research laid the groundwork for the "game theory" of economics, and his lifelong battle with paranoid schizophrenia. Based on the book by Sylvia Nasar.

Beauty and the Beast (SC) An IMAX presentation of the 1991 animated film about the romance that slowly blossoms between a young woman and a formerly handsome prince labouring to lift the spell that has transformed him into a hideous animal. Songs by Alan Menken and Howard Ashman.

Black Hawk Down (CO, FP, GR) Josh Hartnett, Tom Sizemore, Ewan McGregor and Eric Bana star in *Hannibal* director Ridley Scott's vivid war film, an account of the disastrous 1993 Battle of Mogadishu, which began with two U.S. helicopters being shot down and ended with the deaths of hundreds of Somalis and Americans. Based on the book by Mark Bowden.

Charlotte Gray (CO) Cate Blanchett, Billy Crudup and Michael Gambon star in *Little Women* director Gillian Armstrong's WWII soap opera about a Scottish woman who joins the French Resistance in hopes of locating her lover, an RAF pilot who was shot down during a mission over France. Based on the novel by Sebastian Faulks

China: The Panda Adventure (SC) *Dominick and Eugene* director Robert M. Young's IMAX documentary about Ruth Harkness's work with giant pandas in the remote forests of China.

The Count of Monte Cristo (CO, FP) Jim Caviezel, Guy Pearce and Richard Harris star in *Waterworld* director Kevin Reynolds's swashbuckling adaptation of the Alexandre Dumas novel about a falsely imprisoned man who embarks on an elaborate scheme to escape from jail and wreak revenge on the man who framed him.

Gosford Park (CO) Maggie Smith, Helen Mirren, Eileen Atkins, Kristin Scott Thomas, Kelly Macdonald, Michael Gambon, Emily Watson and Clive Owen star in *Short Cuts* director Robert Altman's satirical, densely populated murder mystery, in which aristocrats, servants, Hollywood producers and bumbling detectives intermin-

gle at a British country estate in the 1930s.

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (CO, FP, GR) Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson, Rupert Grint, Richard Harris, Alan Rickman and Maggie Smith star in *Mrs. Doubtfire* director Chris Columbus's big-screen adaptation of J.K. Rowling's massively popular children's book about a boy's eventful first year as a student at a magical school for wizards.

I Am Sam (CO) Sean Penn, Michelle Pfeiffer, Dakota Fanning, Dianne Wiest and Laura Dern star in *Corrina, Corrina* director Jessie Nelson's sentimental weepie about a mentally handicapped single father who goes to court to retain custody of his seven-year-old daughter.

In the Bedroom (GA) Sissy Spacek, Tom Wilkinson, Marisa Tomei and Nick Stahl star in director Todd Field's powerful domestic drama about a New England couple whose marriage begins to fall apart as a result of their son's affair with an older woman, newly separated from her abusive husband. Based on a short story by Andre Dubus.

Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius (CO, FP) Writer/director John A. Davis's computer-animated feature, based on the cable TV series, about a klutzy but brilliant young inventor whose gadgets come in handy when aliens kidnap every adult in his neighbourhood.

Kate and Leopold (CO, GR) Meg Ryan, Hugh Jackman and Liev Schreiber star in *Girl, Interrupted* director James Mangold's time-travelling romantic comedy about an unlucky-in-love single gal who falls in love with a 19th-century gentleman who is accidentally transported into present-day New York.

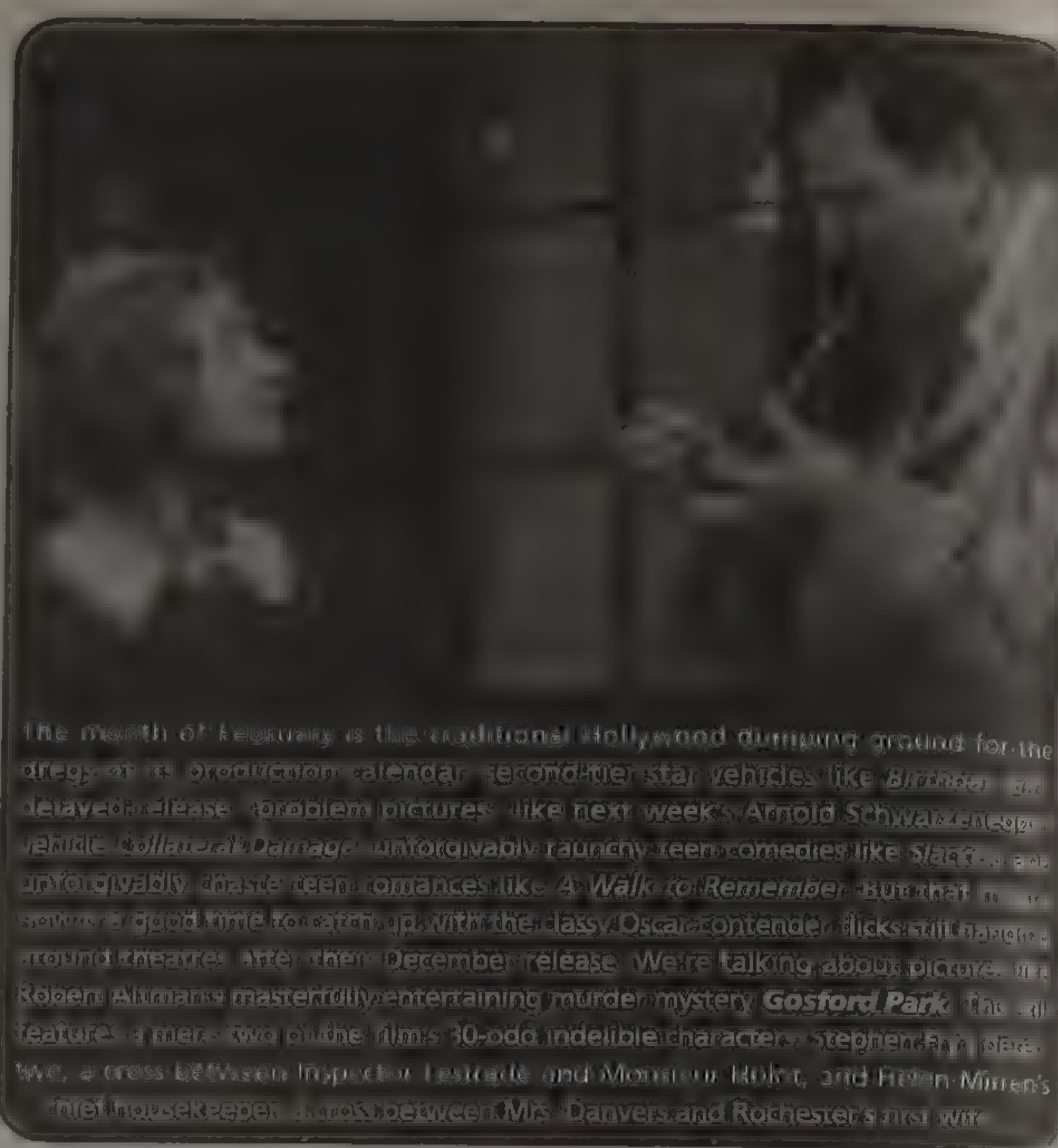
Kung Pow! Enter the Fist (CO, FP) Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls writer/director Steve Oedekerk stars as a gifted, albeit somewhat dimwitted martial arts warrior out to avenge the death of his parents in this parody of chop-socky B-movies, which incorporates extensive actual footage from the 1976 kung fu flick *Tiger and Crane Fists*.

The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring (CO, FP) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen and Christopher Lee star in *Heavenly Creatures* director Peter Jackson's epic film adaptation of the first volume in J.R.R. Tolkien's series of fantasy novels about a quest to destroy an evil, all-powerful ring.

Monsters, Inc. (FP, GR) The voices of Billy Crystal, John Goodman, Steve Buscemi and James Coburn are featured in directors Peter Docter and David Silverman's computer-animated comedy about a little girl who accidentally steps through a portal into Monstropolis, the world all the creatures who lurk under beds and inside closets call home.

The Mothman Prophecies (CO, FP) Richard Gere, Laura Linney, Will Patton and Debra Messing star in *Arlington Road* director Mark Pellington's eerie thriller, based on John Keel's 1975 nonfiction book, about a newspaper reporter investigating alien sightings in a small town in West Virginia.

Not Another Teen Movie (FP) Jaime Pressly, Mia Kirshner, Lacey Chabert and Randy Quaid star in director Joel Gallen's raunchy spoof of teen movies such as *Never Been Kissed*, *She's All That* and *Bring It On*



The month of February is the traditional Hollywood dumping ground for the draggish production calendar: second-tier star vehicles like *Bridget Jones's Diary*, delayed-release "problem pictures" like next week's Arnold Schwarzenegger vehicle *Collateral Damage*, unforgivably raunchy teen comedies like *Slackers*, and unforgivably classic teen romances like *4 Walk to Remember*. But that's not a good time to catch up with the classy Oscar contender flicks still hanging around theatres. After the December release, we're talking about pictures that feature a mere two of the film's 10-odd indelible characters: Stephen Jay Gould, a cross between Inspector Legrande and Monsieur Moliere, and Helen Mirren's chief housekeeper, and between Mrs. Danvers and Rochester's first wife.

Ocean's Eleven (CO, FP) George Clooney, Matt Damon, Brad Pitt, Andy Garcia and Julia Roberts star in *Traffic* director Steven Soderbergh's remake of the 1960 Rat Pack cult film about a gang of hipster criminals with a plan to knock over three Las Vegas casinos on the very same night.

Orange County (CO, FP) Colin Hanks, Jack Black and Mike White star in *Zero Effect* director Jake Kasdan's teen comedy about a studious high school graduate who enlists the aid of his stoner older brother when a clerical error results in his being refused admittance to Stanford University.

The Royal Tenenbaums (CO, FP) Gene Hackman, Gwyneth Paltrow, Ben Stiller, Luke Wilson, Owen Wilson and Anjelica Huston star in *Rushmore* director Wes Anderson's offbeat, whimsical comedy about the patriarch of a celebrated family of child prodigies who makes a last-ditch attempt to heal his relationship with his estranged offspring.

The Shipping News (CO, GR, P) Kevin Spacey, Julianne Moore, Cate Blanchett and Judi Dench star in *Chocolat* director Lasse Hallstrom's adaptation of E. Annie Proulx's award-winning novel about a struggling journalist who decides to recuperate from a recent family trauma by moving back home to a small Newfoundland fishing town along with his young daughter.

Snow Dogs (CO, FP, GR) Cuba Gooding Jr., James Coburn and Graham Greene star in *Jingle All the Way* director Brian Levant's family comedy about a big-city writer who decides

to participate in Alaska's grueling 17-day-long Iditarod dogsled race. Very loosely based on Gary Paulsen's book *Winterdance: The Fine Madness of Running the Iditarod*.

Vanilla Sky (CO, FP) Tom Cruise, Penélope Cruz, Cameron Diaz and Kurt Russell star in *Jerry Maguire* writer/director Cameron Crowe's eerie drama (a remake of Alejandro Amenábar's 1997 Spanish film *Open Your Eyes*) about a shallow playboy whose life becomes a surreal nightmare after he is horribly disfigured in a car crash.

A Walk to Remember (CO, FP) Mandi Moore, Shane West, Peter Coyote and Daryl Hannah star in *The Wedding Planner* director Adam Shankman's small-town teen romance about a rich boy and a minister's daughter falling in love while preparing the annual Christmas pageant. Based on the novel by Nicholas Sparks.

LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285
FP: Famous Players
GA: Garneau Theatre, 433-0728
GR: Grandin Theatres, 458-9822
M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212
P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728
SC: SilverCity IMAX, Famous Players
WEM 484-8581

"Tired of \$12?" #101, 22 Sir Winston Churchill Ave., St. Albert
MOVIE LINE 458-9822 - Doors open 6:15pm Mon-Fri
Adults \$8, Children \$4.50, Tues \$5, Special Matinee prices
Movies run on Saturday and Sunday

Shipping News (14A) 114min	12:10, 2:40, 6:10, 8:40
2 Monsters Inc (G) 93min	12:20, 2:20
2 Kate and Leopold (PG) 118min	6:30, 8:00
3 Harry Potter (PG) 150min Frightening Scenes	2:30, 7:00
4 Black Hawk Down (18A) 144min Gory War Violence	12:00, 2:50, 6:00, 8:50
5 Snow Dogs (G) 100min	12:20, 3:00, 6:20, 8:50

FAMOUS PLAYERS
SHOWTIMES EFFECTIVE: Fri, Feb. 1 - Thu, Feb. 7.
THEATRE WEH 444-7409

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (G) IMAX 2D
No passes, no coupons. Fri 10:30 12:30 2:30 4:30 7:00 9:00
Sat Sun 2:30 4:30 7:00 9:00 Mon 10:30 2:30 4:30 7:00 9:00
Tue Wed Thu 10:30 12:30 4:30 7:00 9:00

BLACK HAWK DOWN (18A) Gory war violence
THX 12:50 4:15 7:30 10:20 10:45

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO (PG)
Violent scenes. THX 1:15 4:30 7:40 10:40

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE (PG) Frightening scenes THX Fri Sat Sun Mon Tue
Thu 12:30 3:40 7:00 Wed 12:30 3:40

CHINA: THE PANDA ADVENTURE (G) IMAX 2D
Showtimes not available

JIMMY NEUTRON: BOY GENIUS (G) THX 12:45 3:10 5:30

KUNG POW: ENTER THE FIST (PG) Crude content
THX 12:55 3:00 5:10 7:20 10:00

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING (14A) Violent scenes
THX 1:10 5:10 8:40 9:10

OCEAN'S ELEVEN (PG) Coarse language
THX 1:50 4:50 7:45 10:30

ORANGE COUNTY (14A) THX 1:20 4:20 6:45 9:30

THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS (14A)
THX 12:35 3:45 6:50 9:40

SLACKERS (18A) Crude sexual content
THX 12:40 2:50 5:20 7:50 10:10

SNOW DOGS (G) THX 1:30 4:10 7:15 9:50

A WALK TO REMEMBER (PG) THX 1:00 4:00 7:10 9:45

PARANORIT THE 10333 Whyte Ave. 433-1167
A WALK TO REMEMBER (PG) Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu
7:00 9:15 Sat Sun 2:15 4:30 7:00 9:15

ENTERTAINMENT 111 Ave. G. 433-8776
A BEAUTIFUL MIND (PG) Mature content. Fri Mon
Tue Wed Thu 6:50 9:40 Sat Sun 12:45 3:40 6:50 9:40

BLACK HAWK DOWN (18A) Gory war violence. Fri
Mon Tue Wed Thu 7:00 10:00 Sat Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING (14A) Violent scenes
Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu 8:15 Sat Sun 12:30 4:15 8:15

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES (PG)
Frightening scenes. Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu 7:10 9:50
Sat Sun 1:10 3:50 7:10 9:50

ENTERTAINMENT 8079 Ave. Lundy. 433-8777
BIRTHDAY GIRL (14A) Sexual content. Fri Mon Tue
Wed Thu 7:30 9:50 Sat Sun 1:30 3:50 7:30 9:50

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE (PG) Frightening scenes. Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu
6:40 9:35 Sat Sun 12:30 3:30 6:40 9:35

JIMMY NEUTRON: BOY GENIUS (G) Fri Mon Tue
Wed Thu 7:10 9:15 Sat Sun 1:00 3:15 7:10 9:15

MONSTERS, INC. (G) Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu 6:55
Sat Sun 2:00 4:30 6:55

NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE (18A) Crude sexual
content throughout. 9:10

ORANGE COUNTY (14A) Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu 7:20
9:25 Sat Sun 1:50 4:20 7:20 9:25

SNOW DOGS (G) Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu 7:15 9:30
Sat Sun 1:15 4:00 7:15 9:30

VANILLA SKY (14A) Coarse language, sexual content
Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu 6:50 9:40
Sat Sun 12:45 3:40 6:50 9:40

A WALK TO REMEMBER (PG) Fri Mon Tue Wed Thu
7:00 9:20 Sat Sun 1:40 4:10 7:00 9:20

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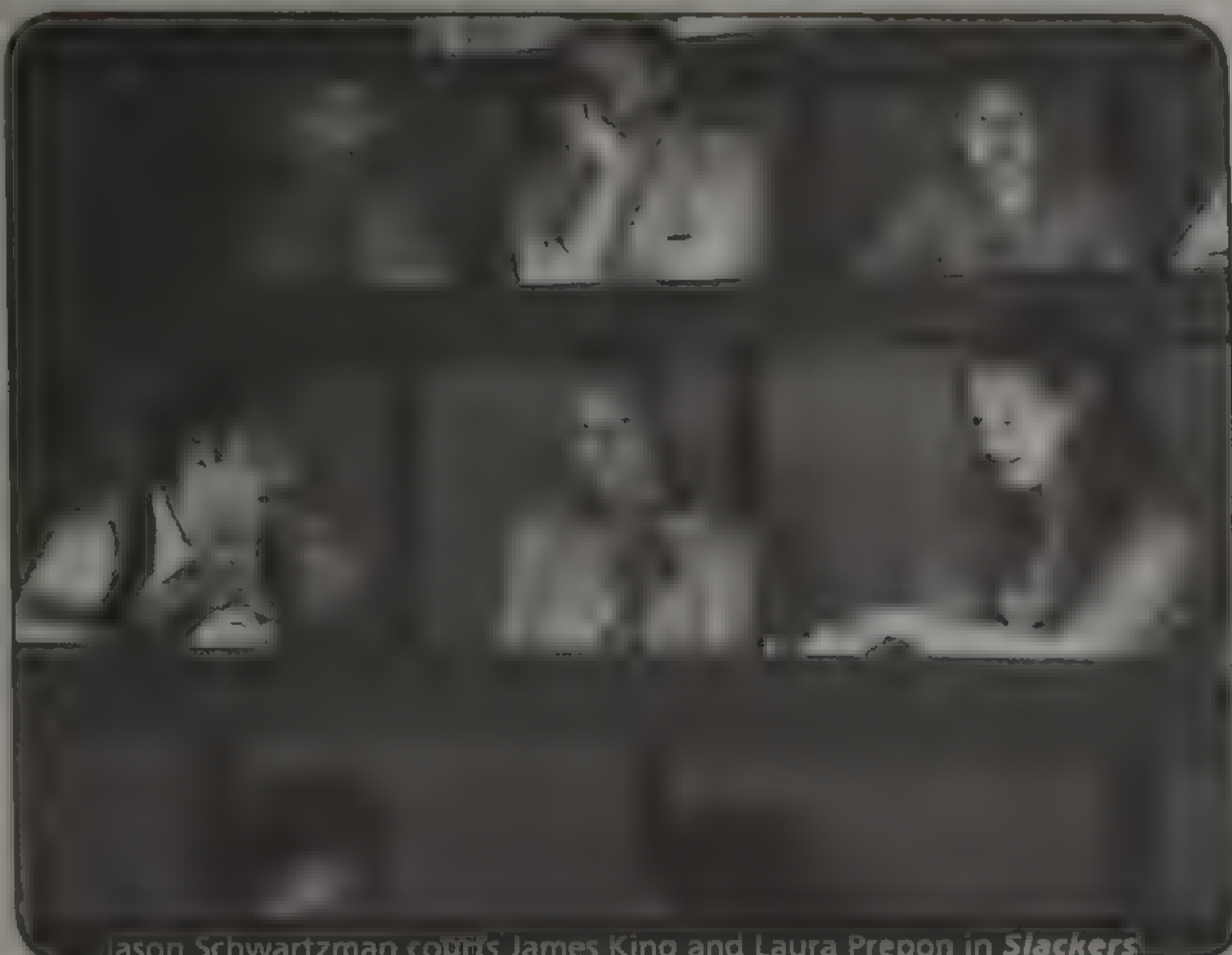
There's nobody to root for in lowbrow, contemptible slackers

By CATHERINE WALSH

Combining the comic sensibilities of *American Pie* with the aesthetic sensitivity of *Hustler*, *Slackers* features healthy doses of sex, a singing penis sequence, several asturbation scenes, lots of nudity and enough wink-wink-nudge-nudge jokes to make you long for the days when audiences' tastes ran more towards the sophisticated comedy of films such as *Police Academy*.

Dave (Devon Sawa), Sam (Jason Segel) and Jeff (Michael C. Maron) have half a semester left before they graduate from university. The trio have spent their entire four years cheating their way through school. The movie opens with an elaborate sequence showing them stealing an exam and looking forward to a lifetime of success in the corporate world. Unfortunately, when the best-laid schemes are never foolproof, and they get caught by "Cool Ethan" (Jason Schwartzman), a fellow student. Ethan offers to keep their secret, but at a price: he wants a girlfriend, specifically the beautiful, unattainable Angela (James King). The slackers oblige by trying to help poor Ethan win the girl of his dreams, but their efforts are sabotaged, not only by Ethan's complete lack of social skills, but by the fact that—you guessed it—Dave finds himself falling in love with Angela. Ethan vows revenge, and the boys have to bust their butts to save their diplomas.

Slackers marks director Dewey Nicks's feature film debut. Nicks's background in commercials and music videos shines through—individually, the scenes look slick, par-



Jason Schwartzman courts James King and Laura Prepon in *Slackers*

ticularly the surreal, self-parodying fantasy sequences. As a whole, however, the movie lacks the momentum to carry it through its modest 87-minute running time. Devon Sawa (*Final Destination*, *Idle Hands*) is appropriately handsome and debonair and his two sidekicks are goofy, funny and even lovable. However, the effort put forth on behalf of the competent cast fails to salvage *Slackers* from the pit of plainly unfunny bad taste. (I'm thinking particularly of a scene where Jason Schwartzman gives an erotic sponge bath to a topless, leathery Mamie Van Doren.)

Stalk character

There are two hurdles that the story fails to overcome. First, the idea of stalking or being stalked is not funny. Ethan doesn't just have a bad crush; he has a looped video of Angela that plays in a shrine he has built. He collects her hair and makes a doll out of it. Second: just who are we supposed to root for? The handsome guy who has spent his whole

life lying and cheating or the nerdy guy who has some serious stalking issues? Although it's painfully clear that the slackers are the good guys, it's hard to hope that either side will emerge triumphant.

The best thing about this movie is also its most disappointing element: Jason Schwartzman. Decked out in an Astroboy haircut and sporting carefully groomed eyebrows, Schwartzman tries hard to bring a level of dignity and humanity to his character. As in *Rushmore*, he's been cast as the ambitious nerd with overwhelming pangs of love, but here, his character drifts from the realm of quirky charm into something that is seriously disturbing. If anything could have saved this film, it would have been Schwartzman's ability to evoke sympathy for the underdog. Still, he does manage a few brief flashes of haunting vulnerability, which gives me hope that his next film will make better use of his talents. **V**

Slackers

Directed by Dewey Nicks • Starring Jason Schwartzman, Devon Sawa, James King and Laura Prepon

PRINCESS THEATRE
10050-82 Ave. • 433-0728

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RAT RACE (also on DVD)
CURSE OF THE JADE SCORPION (also on DVD)

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QUEER AS FOLK - FIRST SEASON (American version)

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Showtimes for Fri, Feb. 1 - Thu, Feb. 7.

BEHIND ENEMY LINES (14A) Sat-Sun 11:15
Daily 1:30 4:25 7:35 10:05 Midnight Fri Sat only 12:35

JOE SOMEBODY (PG) Sat-Sun 11:55
Daily 2:15 4:40 7:10 9:25 Midnight Fri Sat only 11:40

THE LAST CASTLE (14A)
Daily 1:45 4:00 6:50 9:40 Midnight Fri Sat only 12:15

CAPTAIN CORELLI'S MANDOLIN (14A) Violent scenes
Sat-Sun 11:00 Daily 1:35 4:20 6:55 9:50 Midnight Fri Sat only 12:20

ATLANTIS: THE LOST EMPIRE (PG) Sat-Sun 12:05
Daily 2:15 4:35

SPY GAME (14A) Sat-Sun 11:05
Daily 1:45 4:30 7:00 9:45 Midnight Fri Sat only 12:20

K-PAX (PG) Coarse language
Sat-Sun 11:40 Daily 2:10 4:55 7:40 10:10 12:30

OUT COLD (14A) Crude content Sat-Sun 11:45
Daily 2:15 5:00 7:20 9:30 Midnight Fri Sat only 11:45

DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE (14A) Sat-Sun 11:35
Daily 1:55 4:10 7:30 9:55 Midnight Fri Sat only 12:00

BLACK KNIGHT (PG) Crude content Sat-Sun 11:30
Daily 2:00 4:15 7:15 9:35 Midnight Fri Sat only 11:50

THE ONE (14A) Violent scenes Sat-Sun 11:50
Daily 2:20 4:50 7:45 10:15
Midnight Fri Sat only 12:05

SHALLOW HAL (14A) Sat-Sun 11:25
Daily 2:05 4:45 7:25 10:00 Midnight Fri Sat only 12:25

RAT RACE (PG) Coarse language
Sat-Sun 11:40 Daily 2:10 4:55 7:40 10:10 12:30

CINEFLEX ODEON CINEMAS
TALKING MOVIE LISTINGS 444-5468

CINEMA GUIDE
Showtimes for Fri, Feb. 1 - Thu, Feb. 7.

EDMONTON CITY CENTRE CINEMAS
Phase II, 10200-102 Ave. 421-7020

A BEAUTIFUL MIND PG
Mature content. No passes
DTS Digital. Daily 12:40 3:20 6:40 9:40

BLACK HAWK DOWN 18A
Gory war violence. DTS Digital
Daily 12:20 3:40 7:00 10:00

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO PG
Violent scenes. DTS Digital
Fri-Tue Thu 1:00 4:00 7:10 10:10
Wed 1:00 4:00 10:10

GOSFORD PARK 14A
DTS Digital. Daily 12:00 3:10 6:30 9:20

I AM SAM PG
Coarse language. DTS Digital. Daily 12:10 3:20 6:50 9:50

KUNG POW: ENTER THE FIST PG
Crude content
DTS Digital. Daily 1:20 4:20 7:20 9:20

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING 14A
Violent scenes. DTS Digital. Daily 12:30 4:30 8:30

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES PG
Frightening scenes. DTS Digital
Daily 12:50 4:10 7:40 10:20

THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS 14A
DTS Digital. Daily 1:10 3:50 7:30 10:30

WEST MALL
West Phase III Entrance 2 444-1029

A BEAUTIFUL MIND PG
Mature themes. DTS Digital
Fri Mon-Thu 6:35 9:20 Sat-Sun 1:05 3:50 6:35 9:20

BIRTHDAY GIRL 18A
Sexual content. DTS Digital
Fri Mon-Thu 7:00 10:10 Sat-Sun 2:00 4:40 7:00 10:10

GOSFORD PARK 14A
DTS Digital. Fri Mon-Thu 7:00 10:00
Sat-Sun 1:35 4:20 7:10 10:00

I AM SAM PG
Coarse language. DTS Digital. Fri Mon-Thu 6:50 9:30
Sat-Sun 1:10 4:00 6:50 9:30

KATE AND LEOPOLD PG
DTS Digital. Fri Mon-Thu 7:20 9:45
Sat-Sun 1:40 4:30 7:20 9:45

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES PG
Frightening scenes. DTS Digital
Fri Mon-Thu 6:40 9:40 Sat-Sun 1:20 4:10 6:40 9:40

THE SHIPPING NEWS 14A
Mature themes. DTS Digital. Fri Mon-Thu 7:15 9:50
Sat-Sun 1:30 4:15 7:15 9:50

VANILLA SKY 14A
Coarse language, sexual content. DTS Digital
Fri Mon-Thu 6:30 9:25 Sat-Sun 1:00 3:45 6:30 9:25

GRANVILLIUM TOWN CENTRE
4241-139th Avenue 472-2800

A BEAUTIFUL MIND PG
Mature content. DTS Digital
Daily 1:30 4:30 7:25 10:10

BLACK HAWK DOWN 18A
Gory war violence
DTS Digital. No passes
Daily 12:45 3:50 6:50 9:50

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO PG
Violent scenes
DTS Digital. Daily 1:40 4:40 7:30 10:15

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE PG
Frightening scenes
DTS Digital. Daily 12:50

I AM SAM PG
Coarse language
DTS Digital. Daily 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:45

KUNG POW: ENTER THE FIST PG
Crude content
DTS Digital. Daily 1:10 3:05 5:10 7:50 10:30

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING 14A
Violent scenes. No passes
Daily 1:00 5:00 9:00

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES PG
Frightening scenes
DTS Digital. Daily 1:50 4:20 7:20 10:00

SLACKERS 18A
Crude sexual content
DTS Digital. Daily 12:40 2:55 5:15 7:45 10:20

SNOW DOGS PG
DTS Digital. Daily 12:30 2:45 5:05 7:10 9:20

A WALK TO REMEMBER PG
DTS Digital. Daily 4:00 7:40 9:55

SOUTH EDMONTON CINEMA
1575-77 Street 463-5481

A BEAUTIFUL MIND PG
Mature content. THX Daily 12:50 3:50 6:50 9:50

BLACK HAWK DOWN 18A
Gory war violence. DTS Digital. On 2 screens
Daily 12:15 1:30 3:30 4:40 7:00 7:50 10:00 10:40

CHARLOTTE GRAY 14A
DTS Digital. Daily 4:10 9:20

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO PG
Violent scenes. DTS Digital. Daily 1:00 4:00 7:10 10:10

GOSFORD PARK 14A
DTS Digital. Daily 12:20 3:20 6:30 9:30

I AM SAM PG
Coarse language. Daily 12:40 3:40 6:40 9:40

KATE AND LEOPOLD PG
DTS Digital. Daily 1:10 6:45

KUNG POW: ENTER THE FIST PG
Crude content. DTS Digital
Daily 1:45 3:45 5:45 8:15 10:30

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING 14A
Violent scenes. No passes. THX Daily 12:30 4:30 8:30
DTS Digital. On 2 screens
Daily 2:00 3:00 6:30 7:20 10:00

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES PG
Frightening scenes
DTS Digital. Daily 1:50 4:50 7:40 10:20

OCEAN'S ELEVEN PG
Coarse language. DTS Digital. Daily 1:20 4:45 7:25 9:55

THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS 14A
DTS Digital. Daily 1:40 4:15 7:15 9:45

THE SHIPPING NEWS 14A
Mature themes. DTS Digital. Daily 2:10 5:00 8:00

SLACKERS 18A
Crude sexual content. DTS Digital
Daily 12:45 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:15

WEST MALL
Phase I, Entrance 44 444-1031

BEHIND ENEMY LINES 14A
Daily 2:30 4:45 7:15 9:45

IMPOSTOR 14A
Daily 3:45 9:00

JOE SOMEBODY PG
Daily 2:15 4:15 7:30 10:00

OUT COLD 14A
Crude content. Daily 2:45 5:00 7:45 10:10

SERENDIPITY PG
Daily 1:45 6:30

SHALLOW HAL 14A
Daily 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30

SPY GAME 14A
Daily 1:30 4:00 6:45 9:15

VILLAGE PLYER CINEMAS
Village Pkwy. at St. Albert Trail St. 459-1218

ALI 14A
Fri 8:15 Sat-Sun 1:15 4:45 8:15 Mon-Thu 6:45

A BEAUTIFUL MIND PG
Mature content. Fri 6:30 9:30
Sat-Sun 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30 Mon-Thu 6:30

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO PG
Violent scenes. Fri 6:30 9:15
Sat-Sun 12:30 3:30 6:30 9:15 Mon-Thu 6:30

JIMMY NEUTRON: BOY GENIUS G
Fri 6:45 8:45 Sat-Sun 1:30 4:15 6:45 8:45
Mon-Thu 6:45

KUNG POW: ENTER THE FIST PG
Crude content. Fri 7:30 10:00
Sat-Sun 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:30 10:00 Mon-Thu 7:30

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING 14A
Violent scenes. On 2 screens. Fri 7:30 8:30 Sat-Sun 12:30 2:30 4:30 7:30 8:30 Mon-Thu 6:30 7:00

THE MOTHMAN PROPHECIES PG
Frightening scenes. Fri 7:00 9:45
Sat-Sun 1:00 4:15 7:00 9:45 Mon-Thu 7:00

OCEAN'S ELEVEN PG
Coarse language. Fri 7:15 9:45
Sat-Sun 12:45 3:45 7:15 9:45 Mon-Thu 7:15

ORANGE COUNTY 14A
Fri 6:45 9:00 Sat-Sun 1:45 4:30 6:45 9:00
Mon-Thu 6:45

SLACKERS 18A
Crude sexual content. DTS Digital. Fri 7:25 9:55
Sat-Sun 12:30 3:00 5:10 7:25 9:55 Mon-Thu 7:25

A WALK TO REMEMBER PG
Fri 7:00 9:30 Sat-Sun 1:30 4:00 7:00 9:30
Mon-Thu 7:00

That's exploitainment!!!

Mau Mau Sex Sex introduces you to the folksiest filth merchants on earth

By KEVIN MAGER

A documentary from first-time director Ted Bonnitt, *Mau Mau Sex Sex* focusses on the lives and films of Dan Sonney and David Friedman, now 84 and 76 years old respectively, the two men who once led the exploitation film industry in America. And when it comes to explaining the term "exploitation film," it's hard to improve on the definition provided by the *Moving Image Genre Film Guide*: "a fictional or loosely nonfictional work which offered subject matter that was taboo in mainstream cinema. Such work was frequently presented under the guise of preachy exposés, sex education, morality plays and pseudo-documentaries. Standard topics included the dangers of premarital sex, the vice racket, nudist cults, or the dangers of narcotics.... By pandering to an audience's curiosity or prurient interest, such work is on the borderline of censorship restrictions and recognizable for its emphasis on sensational aspects

with little interest in artistic or social merit."

That said, "prurient" interests tend to be defined by the age one lives in. Dan and Dave started making movies in the '30s and continued to unleash their crass camp upon the public into the '60s, when the hardcore porn market eliminated any need for the viewer to imagine just what the "actors" were getting down to onscreen. Not that

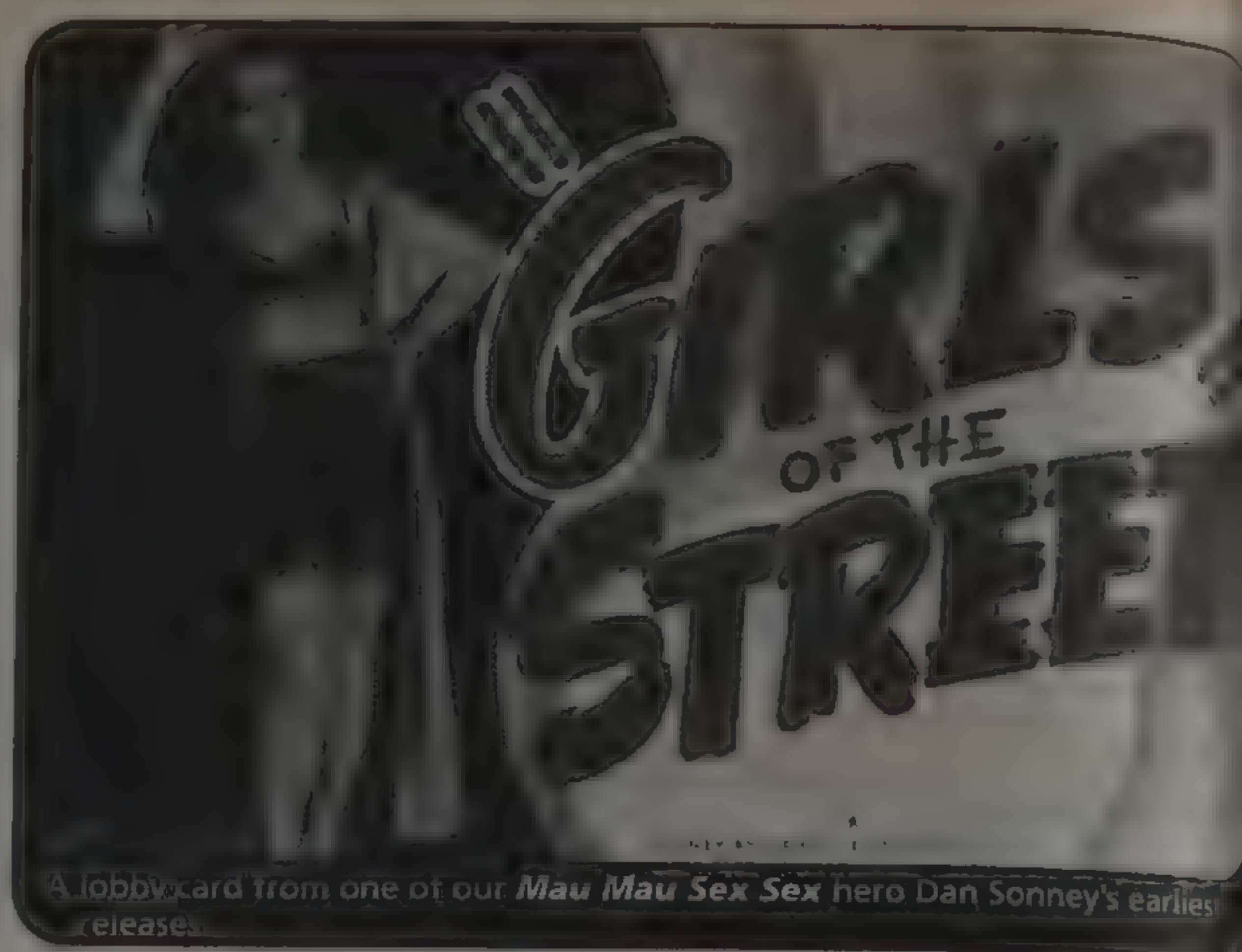
Dan and Dave ever made any pretensions toward morality; the law simply didn't allow them to show full frontal nudity or to present us with sex simply for the sake of titillation—hence the preachy, quasi-educational tone to many of their films. *Mau Mau Sex Sex* bears none of that out, thankfully, and gives us plenty of time to get to know a bit about their families as well as the two guys who the *New York Times* once referred to as "the Sunshine Boys of smut."

Eyes wide smut

There's not too many surprises in store for you as you watch these two old men talk about their past glories, occasionally revealing flashes of their deep-rooted misogyny, laughing about how they made the leap to the next level of success by

marketing their work according to the more sadistic social mores of the period. They laugh about their accomplishments because it was all so easy to do. There is a down-home amiability to these two filmmakers—due, I think, to the fact that they were making very simple movies catering to very basic human appetites at a time when people weren't supposed to enjoy nudity and sex with anyone outside of the bonds of marriage.

Without realizing it, Dan and Dave were making an argument against sexual repression and the social regulation of sexual morality. When Sonney and Friedman made movies, regular folks watched them. People lined up for them because they enjoyed nudity and sex and, later on, sex with violence. Bonnitt's use of clips from their original films arguably bears out much of what is commonplace in feminist film criticism of exploitation pictures (the objectification of women, the violence of the gaze), but the feminist argument becomes even clearer when you learn the way Dan and Dave's "nudie cuties" were shot, or experience the shock of seeing explicit scenes from their so-called "roughies." (The jaw drops in astonishment.) *Mau Mau Sex Sex* is an opportunity to allow these images to work on your brain and—equally importantly—to



learn about how they were produced and sold.

Love Bonnitt

Bonnitt loves Dan and Dave enough to give them their moment in the sun again but respects us enough to show that these guys weren't innocents. His interviews with Sonney's daughter and an exploitation-flick aficionado give us a solid tutorial on these men's personalities that doesn't get bogged down in tedious speculation about their respective psyches.

Filmmakers like Bonnitt love to make movies about that wacky movie-making business because the process of producing these fictional realities—no matter what level of

the industry you look at—has so many appealingly surreal qualities. *Mau Mau Sex Sex* is a film that we all need to see. Not only is it a movie about movies and the men who made them, it's also about the business of sex. It's about our relationship with sex, about erotic voyeurism, about one very important history of sex on film. And at times it's really, really funny—and when you aren't laughing, you're squirming uncomfortably at the sheer pathos of it all. ☉

Mau Mau Sex Sex

Directed by Ted Bonnitt •

Featuring David Friedman and Dan

Sonney • Zeidler Hall, The Citadel •

Fri-Mon, Feb 1-4, 7 and 9pm • Metro

Cinema • 425-9211

The princess diaries

Sophisticated romance was Grace Kelly's Hollywood Swan song

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

The 1956 romantic comedy *The Swan* is best remembered today—if, indeed, it's remembered at all—as Grace Kelly's final film, the one in which she played an incredibly glamorous European princess scarcely weeks before she actually became one in real life. (And many sources don't even remember it that way; while it was filmed earlier, the Cole Porter musical *High Society* was technically the last Grace Kelly film to be released to theatres.) At the time, fan magazines portrayed Kelly's ascension from celluloid princess in *The Swan* to genuine-article princess in Monaco as a real-life fairytale, the kind of blissful happy ending that magazines like *Photoplay* and *Screen World* lived to report on.

Which makes you wonder if anybody who saw *The Swan* was actually paying attention. Despite the film's low-key comic tone, its glamorous setting (a luxurious palace in 1910), its affectionate portrayal of dotty aristocrats and their loyal, long-suffering servants and the endless array

of gowns and tiaras that complement Kelly's stunning beauty, it concludes on a surprisingly downbeat note—the life of an aristocrat, director Charles Vidor says, is not one of privilege but one of loneliness and self-denial. Indeed, the only truly happy characters in the film are the ones who renounced the upper-class life (such as Brian Aherne's character, Father Hyacinth, who has joined a monastery) or who were never

born into it in the first place (such as Louis Jourdan's Dr. Agi, who tutors Kelly's two younger brothers).

Kelly's character recalls the one Audrey Hepburn played in *Roman Holiday*, except Kelly doesn't even get to run away from the palace.

Do you have Prince Albert in the can?

Instead, she's cooped up inside while her overbearing mother (Jessie Royce Landis) tries to show her off to Albert, a visiting Crown Prince (Alec Guinness) who's rumoured to be searching for a bride. Unfortunately, Kelly is so awkward and ill-at-ease in social situations that the Prince winds up spending most of his visit coming up with excuses to avoid her. Guinness gives perhaps the most interesting performance in the film; he was famous for his ability (in films like *Oliver Twist*, *The Ladykillers* and *The Man in the*

White Suit) to use costumes and make-up in order to "disappear" into his roles, but here he vanishes instead behind Albert's well-honed manners and courtly expressions. The subtlety with which Guinness forces us to constantly reassess Albert's personality (Is he a stiff? A snob? Or maybe a gentleman after all?) is really quite a remarkable bit of acting, all accomplished with a minimum of apparent effort.

The film is also graced with several delightful supporting performances—especially Agnes Moorehead's last-act appearance as a domineering queen who swans in and shows Landis a thing or two about bossing people around and the wonderful turn by the great Estelle Winwood as Kelly's sweetly vacant Aunt Symphora—but the pace is a little too poky and Kelly's character a little too unsympathetic to qualify it as a must-see. (Although there is some curiosity value in seeing cult recording artist Van Dyke Parks, then only 15, playing Kelly's brother George.)

From Ruggles to Reckless

The Swan is the first film in the Edmonton Film Society's winter series, which spotlights lesser-known films by four of the greatest British actors of the '30s, '40s and '50s: Alec Guinness, Laurence Olivier, James Mason and Charles Laughton. The EFS programmers have assembled an excellent lineup of films, but allow



Help me, Obi-Wan! Princess Grace Kelly and Alec Guinness in *The Swan*

me to suggest a few standouts:

• **Five Fingers** (1952): James Mason plays a scheming valet who uses his position with the British ambassador to Turkey to run a lucrative trade in selling state secrets in this largely forgotten but hugely entertaining fact-based film written and directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, the creator of *All About Eve* and *A Letter to Three Wives*. It looks like an espionage thriller, but it's really one of the wickedest satires of class envy ever made. (February 18)

• **Ruggles of Red Gap** (1935): Director Leo McCarey's democratic approach to screen comedy enlivens this vehicle for Charles Laughton, who plays a British butler whose frosty manner thaws when he is won in a poker game by a rootin'-tootin' American rancher. An underrated little gem. (March 4)

• **Pride and Prejudice** (1940): If Greer Garson has turned out to be one of the least fondly remembered

female stars of the '40s, perhaps it's because her onscreen personality was too similar to that of Jane Austen's prickly, aristocratic brittle-witted Elizabeth Bennet. But that's part of what makes this adaptation of Austen's novel—co-scripted by Aldous Huxley—work so well. That, and Laurence Olivier's stiff-backed yet subtly sexy performance as Mr. Darcy. (March 11)

• **The Reckless Moment** (1949): One of a handful of remarkable, visually fluid melodramas director Max Ophüls made during his brief postwar sojourn in Hollywood. This thriller (based on Elizabeth Sanxay Holding's novel *The Blank Wall*) was remade last year as *The Deep End*, and they make a fascinating study in contrasts. That gay subplot in *The Deep End*, for instance? Not here. (April 1) ☉

A British Queen

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he opposite of sex

Porn Star is funny, charming, but surprisingly conservative

by PAUL MATWYCHUK

Craddock's new one-woman monologue *Porn Star* is a very funny play and I liked it the same time,

To explain why I think so, how-
ing to have

away a lot of the plot, so skip
view if you plan on seeing it.

Porn Star is the story of Esther Matwychuk, a likable, sunny, if a bit shy librarian from small-town Bow, Saskatchewan. One day she gets a shocking package in the mail: it contains (1) a videotape of her ex-boyfriend of the two having sex, and (2) an invitation to the Pronto Video Awards in Toronto, where she has been nominated in the "best amateur performer" category. Esther is initially embarrassed by the news she has unknowingly been turned into an X-rated starlet, but she's also intrigued and a little flattered as well. So she eagerly packs her bags and flies to Toronto. There she meets Clarice Dubois, a sex advice show hostess who shares her romantic heartbreaks

behind a constant air of jaded sophistication. Sparks fly.

What's disappointing about *Porn Star* is the way that, despite its title and its racy subject matter, Craddock's female characters have to back away from sex before they can be happy. Even though Esther is presented with the opportunity to make more porn videos at the end of the play, she turns it down, saying she doesn't think she could be sexy if she

actually knew a camera was filming her. She isn't really a porn star, she tells us reassuringly; she "just plays

one on certain TVs." (Not that becoming a full-time porn actress would be liberating, either, obviously, but let me finish my point.) Clarice, meanwhile, is another version of that old stereotype that any powerful woman who seems in control of her own sexuality deep down is in fact desperately unhappy. The play ends with Clarice and Esther falling in love and shacking up together in Toronto, but Craddock shies away from talking about their relationship as a sexual one—Esther calls it "hanging out together every day, forever," as if these two grown women were still high school buddies. She even refuses to describe their first night together in bed, saying it's "none of our business." Craddock suggests that Esther has finally been sexually liberated at the end of the play, but I'm not so sure—she abandons her job as a

librarian to work beneath Clarice as her "research assistant," which to me sounds like she's giving up a valid, independent career, however modest, in order to become a "kept woman" in the big city. That's a progressive ending?

A very, very, very fine House

Despite my misgivings, I nevertheless found myself rooting for Esther every step of the way, largely because of the winning performance by Andrea House. She brings to the stage a self-deprecating, almost apologetic stage presence that matches up with Esther's shyness; a genuineness and an eager spontaneity that convinces you Esther actually would enjoy all the attention her Pronto nomination gets her; and an unforced sense of comic timing that sells all of Craddock's frequently hilarious gags. (When Esther first watches her porno tape, her initial reaction is, "You know, I really like my hair back then.")

House plays several smaller roles in the play as well. She makes Kate (Esther's younger sister who committed suicide at age 14 after getting herself pregnant and narrates her portion of the play from Hell) into a somewhat sympathetic character even though on the page she's a selfish, irresponsible little brat. She's unluckier with Esther's mother Sharon, a God-fearing, Day-loving,



Porn again Christian? Despite her breast intentions, Andrea House's character reveals conservative side in *Porn Star*

homophobic Alliance MP who's such an extreme caricature that her scenes have only one layer for House to perform.

Craddock scores a lot of easy laughs off Sharon, whose worldview is repressed to the point of lunacy, but *Porn Star*'s viewpoint isn't too far removed from Sharon's. Sex doesn't make women happy, Craddock seems to be implying; family does. (The most obscene notion in the play is House's opening line: "Prime

Minister Stockwell Day, Prime Minister Stockwell Day.") There's nothing wrong with celebrating the virtues of a loving family, of course, and not many plays do it with this much off-beat humour. Whether that's the message you want to take away from a play entitled *Porn Star*, however, is another matter. ☐

Porn Star

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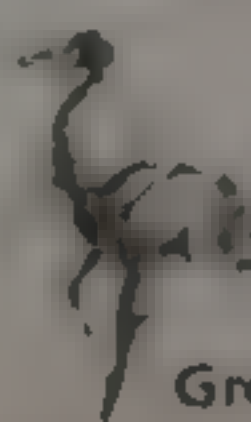
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Virk and play

Joan MacLeod wrestles with notorious murder case in *Shape of a Girl*

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

"It's hard to talk about a lot of my plays," says Vancouver playwright Joan MacLeod, "but this one is especially hard. I'm still not as clear about what I'm saying in it as I am with some of my others. I haven't worked out my shtick yet."

MacLeod is talking about *The Shape of a Girl*, the leadoff play in this year's Kaboom! series at Workshop West. It's a psychologically intimate one-woman show inspired by the murder of Reena Virk, the teenaged girl who in November of 1997 was lured by a group of her fellow students, many of them girls, underneath a bridge and savagely beaten. After this initial beating, a boy and a girl—Warren Glowatski and Kelly Ellard—split off from the initial mob, followed the injured Virk as she tried to make her way home and then attacked her again, dragged her unconscious body into the water and left her to die. The inexplicable savagery of the killing,

as well as the fact that a large number of Virk's assailants were teenage girls, spawned a wave of horrified commentary and speculation on the part of the media, not to mention a spate of fictionalized explorations of the event from novelists and playwrights—MacLeod among them.

"It was enormously difficult to write about," MacLeod says. "I wanted to be respectful [of the real-life tragedy]—it took me almost five years to write it, and even as late as 2000, Kelly Ellard's trial was still in the news. But at the same

time, I didn't want to be sucky about it either." After a lot of

trial and error, MacLeod finally settled on a more oblique approach to the material: *The Shape of a Girl* is the story of Braidie (Jenny Young), an ordinary teenaged girl who had nothing to do with the Virk case, but who, as she thinks about her own group of friends and their tormenting of a Virk-like outcast classmate named Sofie, nevertheless understands instinctively how such a terrible event could happen.

Point and clique

"I needed to find a way to feel comfortable writing about Reena Virk," MacLeod explains. "Believe me, I tried every point of view imaginable. There are even a few terrible early drafts where Virk's ghost is a character. But it became clear pretty early on

that my character needed to have a story of her own.... I also think that most of us aren't bullies or victims, and I wanted to create someone that would reflect that perspective."

But *The Shape of a Girl* is anything but circumspect in its emotional and moral impact on an audience. "I find they get right into it," MacLeod says, "especially the female members of the audience. I think the elements of the Reena Virk story are very familiar to them. I know that when I saw the picture of Reena Virk in the newspaper, I immediately thought, 'Oh, she was one of 'those girls,' and I felt horrible to have thought that."

Probably everyone who's been through elementary school knows instinctively what MacLeod means by "those girls": those unlucky outcasts who everybody instinctively knows is the one who they can get away with torturing. "It's a particularly female thing," MacLeod says. "My daughter just turned six and already I can see it starting in her class, the little girls bullying each other not through physical violence but socially, through exclusion."

A sentence and a question mark

I suggest that perhaps the proper reaction to cases like the Reena Virk murder or the killing of James Bulger in England isn't horror, but amazement that these kinds of tragic

events don't happen all the time, and MacLeod agrees—not because she thinks children are inherently evil, but simply because it's very easy for children to let things get out of control. I ask her what she thinks the best way would be to deal with Virk's killers, but it's a question MacLeod says she has no idea how to answer. "All I know is, every part of the Reena Virk story, every girl involved in it, every family, their life stories just break my heart," she says. "Kelly Ellard drives me crazy with the way she insists on this tough-girl act, and yet she breaks my heart. Obviously,

people have to be held responsible for their actions, but..."

You could call *The Shape of a Girl* a conflicted play, and maybe that's what's so potent about it. MacLeod knows that while our instinct may be to identify with Reena Virk, the victim, there are much more likely that when we were in school, we would have numbered ourselves, if not among the victimizers, then the ones who stood by and did nothing to stop them.

The Shape of a Girl
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The play's the thingamajig

Contraption • Jagged Edge Theatre (3rd Floor, Edmonton Centre) • To Feb 9 • reVUE

In the opening scene of this odd little play by Gordon Pengilly (of *Seeds* and *Metastasis* fame), a middle-aged working stiff named Paul (Tom Johnson) gives his wife Nancy (Michele Vance Hehir) some terrible news: he's been fired from his job in the hardware section of Canadian Tire—a job he's held for close to 25 years—after an angry clash that ended with him shoving his boss into the wall. The next few scenes are fairly naturalistic, as Paul sinks into a deep depression which neither Nancy nor his university-student daughter Janny (Angela Pagano) or his older, married son Tommy (Jesse Gervais) have any idea how to deal with.

But the play takes a strange turn when this John Q. Lunchbucket character starts turning into Barton Fink (with a dash of the Richard Dreyfuss character from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* thrown in for good measure). Paul starts hearing loud sawing and hammering noises coming from the neighbouring apartment; before long, he starts spending his entire day listening at the wall, trying to figure out what this unseen stranger could possibly be building in there—and even more bizarrely, Paul decides to buy some lumber and start constructing a contraption of his own.

There's an interesting theme lurking around the edges of this play; namely, the way people often have no idea how to reach out to a family member—especially a parent—even when they're obviously in the middle of a serious life crisis. I think there's something pretty psychologically acute in Pengilly's portrayal of Janny and Tommy as being totally ineffective in the face of Paul's breakdown; beyond Janny making a homemade pizza with Nancy and Tommy watching a televised hockey game with Paul, they're stumped. As it turns out, both Janny and Tommy have been keeping secrets from their parents as well, and for a while it looks like the loss of Paul's job will be the catalyst that exposes some of the faultlines in a family that turns out to be a little more dysfunctional than they themselves ever realized.

But unfortunately, Pengilly winds up devoting much more time to Paul and his contraption-building, which never seems like anything more than a forced theatrical conceit, as do the overwritten speeches Pengilly makes Paul deliver about the magical properties of wood. And, as uncommunicative as this family is, I had a hard time believing that Paul's project would be allowed to get as massive as it does without someone slapping him and telling him, for God's sake, to pull himself together. (I don't want to give away the ending and tell you what Paul's project turns out to be, but it's such a demented surprise that Pengilly's attempt to fashion a heart-warming, lyrical final scene around it simply falls flat.)

Trivia fun fact: *Contraption* is the second play in Jagged Edge's 2001/2002 season (along with Katherine Koller's *Maggie*) in which the lead character carries on extended conversations with the ghost of a dead par-

ent. Is this by design, or is it simply the result of JET's playwrights watching too many episodes of *Providence*?

Jane gang

Ah, show tunes. Life would be greyer without them, or at least choreographed a lot more poorly. And any fan of musical theatre will not need much coaxing to attend *See Jane Sing!*, a fundraiser this Sunday night at the Varscona Theatre for Leave It to Jane, the theatre company responsible

for bringing such offbeat, groundbreaking musicals as *Violet*, *Saturday Night*, *Wonderful Town* and the recent *Floyd Collins* to Edmonton stages. The evening will be hosted by Jane vets Bridget Ryan and Jeff Haslam and will feature musical performances by Sheri Somerville, Kate Ryan, Ron Pederson, Celina Stachow, Dana Wylie, John Kirkpatrick, Jocelyn Ahlf and many other golden-throated denizens of the local theatre community. Tickets are \$20, including reception; call 433-3399 (mailbox #1) to reserve yours. ☎



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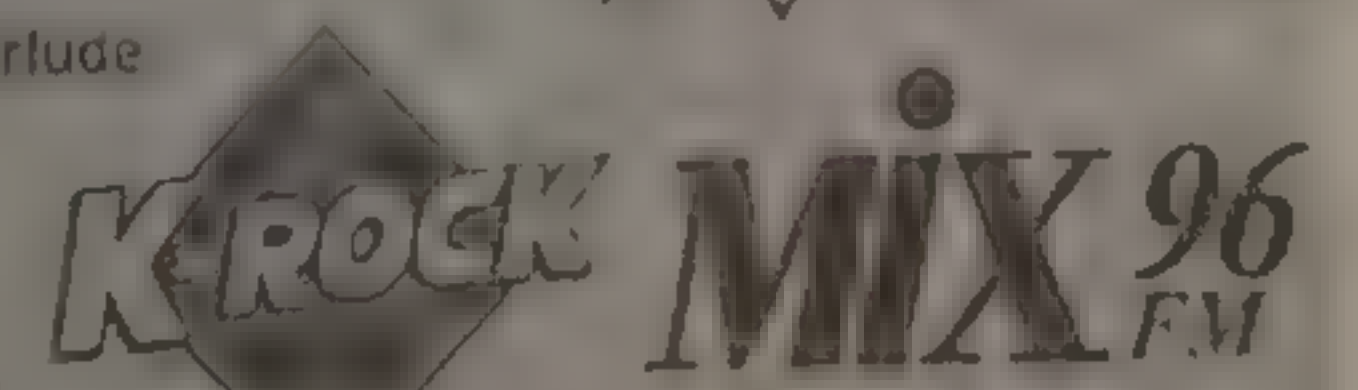
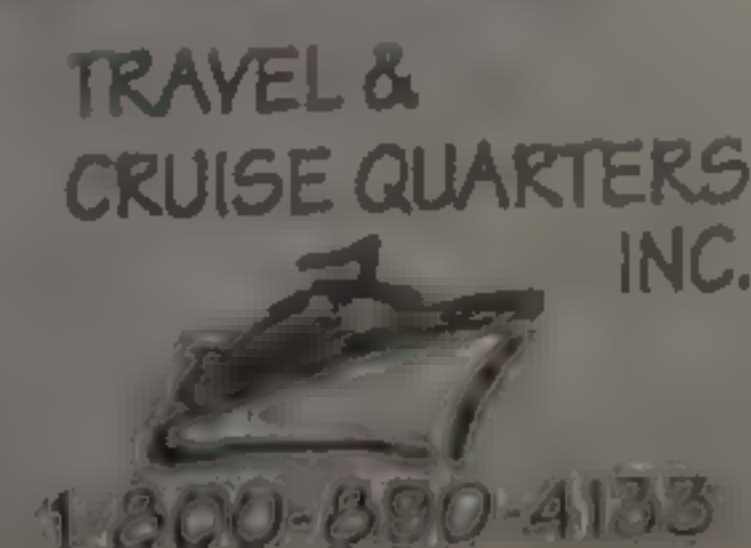
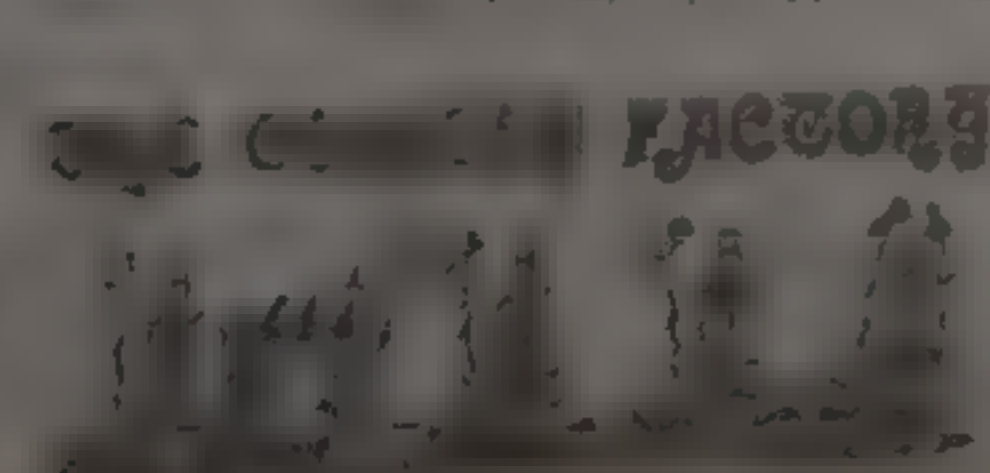
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THEATRENOTES

PAUL MATWYCHUK

to mono

a Crowd Festival • Jekyll and Pub (10610-100 Ave) • Fri-Feb 1-2 • preVUE It's always hear about a new theatre festi- ing launched in Edmonton, but- ing of monologues and one- shows? That's kind of... well, it's, isn't it?

so, says Sound and Fury The- stic director Scott Sharplin, has marshalled the talents of man 15 playwrights, actors musicians for an event he's call- e One's a Crowd Festival, a cel- ion of theatre's loneliest, pest and in some ways most- enging format. "One-man- shouldn't just be relegated to fringe ghetto," as it were," says lin. "That's one thing I wanted out with this event—they're st a Canadian theatrical tradi- There have been so many great person shows in Canada's short- y of theatre: *Billy Bishop Goes to The Occupation of Heather Rose*, el MacIvor's work. Who knows that is—maybe there's some- about isolation in there some- re. But it's a big chapter of dian theatre history."

me of the pieces that will be- ed this weekend have made- already: Sharplin himself will- ing an excerpt from Vern- en's acclaimed play *Blowfish*, or Elter will perform a segment his upcoming Fringe show *The* (after having knocked out- nces with a brief but very- ive outtake from the same- at NeXtFest last June) and- Schmidt will read his almost- ortably intimate monologue- arrow, an absolutely riveting- that he first performed in 2000- rkshop West's Springboards- series.

exactly that kind of powerful- ional intimacy that drew- n to the idea of an evening- ogues in the first place. "It's- been an interest of mine to- t one-person shows can do- ther 'normal' plays can't," he- They can establish a more- get with audiences, for- and this is also the case that- can begin develop- by focussing on the mono- so it's also a way to help- at that early stage of develop- Accordingly, Sharplin has- d up new work by Heather- , Morgan Smith, Andrew- nd Twilla MacLeod.

now, the One's a Crowd fes- a small-scale event, but don't- estimate it: Sharplin says he- that one day it'll grow to the- there they can mount full-scale- tions of full-length plays. After- arplin says, "It's a theatrical sub- to be reckoned with."

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The value of cross-cultural learning

Exchange program
opens Canadian
kids' eyes to the
world

By SHAUNA KOZAK

It has been said that life's best lessons are often learned outside school walls. According to Zane Hamm, you can take this principle one step further and say that life's best lessons are often learned outside a nation's borders.

As program officer with Canada World Youth (CWY), Hamm spends her days giving youth from Canada and around the world the opportunity to travel, live and work in different communities and gain the knowledge

and experience that comes from stepping outside your comfort zone. "The Canada World Youth program is a non-formal and experiential form of education that allows for learning in a real life context," Hamm explains. "This is a far cry from the type of learning you would get out of a textbook or off a blackboard."

While the value of learning the rights and wrongs of those old standbys reading, writing and arithmetic cannot be argued,

Hamm suggests that cross-cultural understanding needs to take a front seat. Pointing to the realities of September 11, Hamm says kids need to learn tolerance for those who are different. The CWY Youth Exchange Program pairs up 17- to 20-year-olds from Canada with counterparts from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the

Caribbean or central and eastern Europe. Participants spend half of the seven-month program together in Canada and the other half in the other country. Depending on the stated needs of the exchange partners, each program can have a specific educational objective such as agriculture, rural development, language teaching or domestic violence.

"Part of our mandate is to build just, harmonious and sustainable societies," Hamm says. "This happens when you bring together two very different people from two very cultures and it is not something that can be easily taught inside a school. This type of learning comes from living and working within a new culture."

Don't ask CWY

Now celebrating 30 years of success, CWY seems to be doing a

good job. An independent study indicates that former CWY participants are more prepared for the labour market (and are at least three times more likely to be employed than other youth) and become more socially responsible and involved community leaders. They do twice as much volunteer work than the average Canadian and demonstrate high levels of commitment to social, cultural and environmental issues.

"The program allows Canadian youth with an opportunity to meet youth from other countries and exposed to other realities and ways of life," Hamm says. "There is a better way to promote cultural understanding and international solidarity than by encouraging people to get to know one another and experience the potential of working and learning together."

education

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ARTS WEEKLY

FREE listing, fax 426-2889 or
mail listings@vue.ab.ca.
Deadline is 3pm Friday.

ART GALLERIES

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY
186-106 St., 488-6611, 488-5900.
ALBERTA SEEN LANDSCAPES IN FIBRE:
Representational and abstract landscape
works by quilters, needle workers, weavers,
makers, fabric painters and others who
work with fibre. Until Mar. 2. **THE DIS-**
COVERY GALLERY REACHING FOR THE
STARS: New fibre works by Kate Mitchell
and Christine Zedler. Until Mar. 2.

BARCLAY GALLERY 10403-124 St.,
488-1204. Works by gallery artists includ-
Daphne Odjig, George Littlechild, Jane
Poitras and Joanne Cardinal Schubert.
Until Feb. 28.

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
THE BLIND Sheraton Grande Hotel, 453-
1008. **EYE ON ART:** Art by visually impaired
and other local artists. Live and silent auc-
tion FRI, Feb. 1. Entertainment by Dale
Carney (host/auctioneer), Victoria
Performing Arts School, Leona Burkey
(singer). TIX \$50 ea. Fundraising event.
With tickets \$20 for art auction portion of
evening.

CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA
8627-91 St., 461-3427. Group show
featuring members' works. Until Feb. 6.

THEATRE THEATRE Rice Theatre Lobby,
428-101A Ave. **DOING LEONARD**
COHEN—THE EXHIBITION: Featuring the
work of 13 artists to coincide with One
Yellow Rabbit's production of *Doing Leonard*.
Until Feb. 9-Mar. 17.

DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124
St., 488-4445. **SUPERB EXECUTIONS AND**
GREAT HANGINGS: Curated by Dean
Weaver. Showcasing the work of Paul Butler,
John Bateman, Steve Fleury, Rodney Sayers,
Emily Luce, Craig Le Blanc, Kelly Mark and
Mara Korkola. Feb. 2-16. Opening recep-
tion SAT, Feb. 2, 2-4pm.

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir
Winston Churchill Sq., 422-6223,
www.eag.org. Open Mon-Wed and Fri
10am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat,
Sun 11am-5pm. **JADE: THE ULTIMATE**
TREASURE OF ANCIENT CHINA: Until Mar.
1. **SHUI-BO WANG: SUNRISE OVER**
MANMEN SQUARE: Until Mar. 24. **THU**
(noon): *Swinging Beijing* (video/lecture).
AFTER DARK SERIES Jade Plugs for Nine
Evenings of the Human Body. FRI, Feb. 1,
10pm. TIX \$20 non-member, \$15 member
@ TIX on the Square. **IN THE KITCHEN:**
FORMS: New works by Gloria Mok.
Until Mar. 24. **CHILDREN'S GALLERY**
FROM HEAD TO TOE: Created by Lisa
Gurray. Until July 28. Admission \$8 adult;
\$4 student/senior; \$3 ages 6-12, kids under
3 free, \$19 family.

SPECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO AND
GALLERY 12419 Stony Plain Rd., 482-
4002. **2001 TWO:** Sculpture by Lawrence
Kawewich and painting by Lori
Kawewich. Feb. 2-Mar. 1. Opening recep-
tion, artists in attendance SAT, Feb. 2, 2-
4pm.

THE GALLERY 1-1 Fine Arts Building, U of
Alberta Campus, 112 St., 89 Ave., 492-2081.
Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sun 2-5pm.
ARTS ACTUAL: Works by contemporary
Canadian artists. Feb. 5-24. Opening recep-
tion THU, Feb. 7, 7-10pm. **Rm. 2-20,**
THU 7 (5pm): Public lecture by José
Manuel Springer (curator).

ART DOOR 10308-81 Ave., 432-7535.
Sculpture and soapstone carvings (human, bears,
fish, seals, birds, Inukshuk) by Arlook.
Also Coast Indian and Eskimo gold and sil-
ver jewellery by K. Law. Through Feb.

THE FRINGE GALLERY Bsmr., 10516
101st Ave., 432-0240. Open daily 9:30am-
6pm. Closed Sunday. The Paint Spot Staff
will be on hand. Feb. 2-28.

GENERATIONS GALLERY 5411-51 St.,
Stony Plain, 963-2777. **THE PETALS SUITES:**
A visual haiga. Drawings by Kris van Eyk
and poetry by Gerald St. Maur. Glass art by
Jordans. Until Feb. 11.

JORDANO GALLERY Main Fl., Empire
Building, 10080 Jasper Ave., 429-5066.
Open Wed 11am-4pm, Sat 12:30pm or
by appointment. Featuring gallery artists
Mark Lang, Tony Calzetta and Marcia
Lang. Until Feb. 16.

FRANK MACLEWAN COMMUNITY COL-
LEGE Jasper Place Campus, Rm. 203,
1045-156 St., 497-4321. THU 24
(11:30am): Colette Whiten (visiting artist)
lecture and slide presentation. Free. *497-
1140. MacEwan Arts Showcase: Workshops,

tours and demonstrations. Feb. 6, 5-9pm.

GREAT BEAR FRAMING-UPSTAIRS
GALLERY 11631-105 Ave., 452-8906.
REMIX: Paintings by Daryl Rydman. Until
Feb. 23.

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 Street,
426-4180. Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat
12-4pm. **TRACE:** Installation by Leah
Decter. Until Feb. 9. **FRONT ROOM THE**
GULF: A series of portraits by David
Svendsen. Until Feb. 9.

JOHNSON GALLERY *7711-85 St., 465-
6171. Open Mon-Fri 8am-5:30pm; Sat
9am-5pm. Recent works by Marta
Thomson, Joe Haire, Phyllis Webb Jeffery
and Meta Ranger. Prints by Toti. Pottery by
Helena Ball. *11817-80 St. Open Tue-Fri:
9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm.
Watercolours by Glenda Beaver, Brian
Traver-Smith, Jim Painter and John
McMann.

LATITUDE 53 10137-104 Street, 423-
5353. Open Tue-Fri 10am-6pm; Sat noon-
5pm. **COLLAPSING NEW BUILDINGS:**
Minimalist sculptures by Luis Jacob. The
series is shown with black and white photo-
graphs of the skyscrapers from which the
forms were modeled. Until Feb. 23. **PRO-**
JEX ROOM SEPTEMBER 14, 2000; HOME-
LESS COUNT: 1160: Ongoing project by
Calgary artist Marjan Eggermont. Until Feb.
23.

MCMULLEN GALLERY University of
Alberta Hospital, East Entrance, 8440-112
St., 407-7152. **GIFTS FROM THE LAND - A**
SHOW OF NEW DONATIONS: New dona-
tions from professional Edmonton artists to
the hospital collection. Until Apr. 7.

MOUNTAIN FOODS CAFÉ - JASPER
Connaught Drive, across from the Via
Station. **KUNST AUSSTELLUNG EXHIBITION**
WALL: Watercolours by St. Albert artist
Diane Way. Until Feb. 11.

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19
Perron Street, St. Albert, 460-4310. Open
Tue-Sat 10-5pm. Thu until 8pm. **FLORAL:**
Donna Gallant, Joan Todd, Jeff Holmwood
and Carol Jane Campbell. Until Feb. 2.
REVISIONS: Barb Pankratz, Lewis Lavoie,
Linda Carreiro. Feb. 6-Mar. 1. Opening
reception WED, Feb. 6, 7-9pm.

RED GALLERY AND STUDIO 9621
Whyte Ave., 439-8210. Open Tue-Sat
11am-5pm. Recent paintings by Christl
Bergstrom. Exploring universal themes
through domestic landscapes, portraits and
still lifes. Until Feb. 15.

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St., 423-
1492. Open Tue-Sat noon-5pm. **GRÁFICA**
ACTUAL: Works by contemporary Mexican
artists. Feb. 5-23.

SNOWBIRD GALLERY WEM, 8882-170
St., 444-1024. Featuring works by J.
Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson. Acrylics
by Jim Vest, pottery by Noburo Kubo and
Jacqueline Stenberg. Art glass available.
Artists in the courtyard continues every
weekend.

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park
Plaza, St. Albert, 460-5990. Open Mon-Fri
10am-6pm; Sat 10am-5pm. **RESILIENCE:** Oil
paintings, watercolours and mixed-media
works by various artists. Also new works by
Carole May Coty and Bruce Allen.

SUSSEX GALLERIES 290 Saddleback
Road, 988-2266. Landscapes, cityscapes,
florals, nudes, surreal paintings as well as
glassworks, sculptures and ceramics by vari-
ous artists.

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CENTRE
GALLERY 2nd Fl., University Extension
Centre, 8303-112 St., 492-3034. Open
Mon-Thu 8:30am-8pm; Fri 8:30am-
4:30pm; Sat 9am-noon. Leslie
Taillefer—graduating student exhibition.
Feb. 4-14. Opening reception FRI, Feb. 8,
6-9pm.

UPSTAIRS GALLERY/GREAT BEAR
FRAMING 2nd Fl., 11631-105 Ave., 452-
8906. Open Mon-Sat 9-5pm. **REMIX:**
Paintings by Daryl Rydman. Until Feb. 23.

VANDERLEELIE GALLERY 10344-134 St.,
452-0286. Open Tue-Sat 11am-5pm.
WATER SURFACES: Four large canvases by
David Alexander exploring the reflective
surface. Until Feb. 19.

VISUAL ARTS ALBERTA ASSOCIATION
3rd Fl. Harcourt House, 10215-112 St.,
421-1731. **REFLECTIONS:** Watercolours by
Michelle Leavitt-Djonlic. Until Feb. 6.

THE WORKS GALLERY Main Floor,
Commerce Place (beside ICON Hair), Jasper
Ave., 426-2122. Open Mon-Sat 10am-
4pm. **THE IMPOSTER:** Works by Savi Pannu.
Until Feb. 23. Closing reception WED, Feb.
20, 7-9pm.

DANCE

ARDEN THEATRE 5 St. Anne Street, St.
Albert, 459-1542. Margie Gillis. TIX \$22.50
adult, \$18.50 student/senior. Tue, Feb. 5,
8pm.

LA CITÉ FRANCOPHONE 8527 91 St.,
420-1757. *Feets, Don't Fail Me Now!*
Presented by Kompany Dance. Fri, Feb. 1-
Sat, Feb. 2, 8pm. TIX \$12 adult, \$10 sen-
ior/student @ TIX on the Square, @ door
night of performance.

THEATRE

AMPHITRYON Walderdale Playhouse,
10322-83 Ave., 439-2845. By Heinrich von
Kleist. Until Feb. 2.

THE BIRTH OF ROCK 'N' ROLL
Jubilations Dinner Theatre, Upper Level,
Phase III, WEM, 484-2424. Welcome back
to the '50s. Attend the grand opening of
ROCN, the newest radio station in town.
Feb. 1-Apr. 14.

BRITISH INVASION Mayfield Dinner
Theatre, 16615-109 Ave., 483-4051, 486-
7827. By B. Roberts and Will Marks. A tribute
to the British contribution to the world of
popular music. Until Feb. 10. TIX \$39-\$74.

CHIMPROV! The New Varscona Theatre,
10329-83 Ave., 448-0695. Every Saturday
at 11pm. Featuring Rapid Fire Theatre's top
improvisers.

CONTRAPTION 3rd floor, Edmonton
Centre, 463-4237, 420-1757. By Gordon
Pengilly. Presented by Jagged Edge Theatre.
Paul Merriam is fired after working at
Canadian Tire for 25 years. Until Feb. 9. TIX
\$8; \$4 Tue. Adv. tickets @ TIX on the
Square.

DOING LEONARD COHEN The Citadel,
Rice Theatre, 426-4811. Adapted by Blake
Brooker. Presented by One Yellow Rabbit. A
radical approach to Canadian poetry, an
unorthodox staging of Cohen's work. Feb.
9-Mar. 17.

KABOOM 2 Kaasa Theatre, Jubilee
Auditorium, 11455-87 Ave., 420-1757,
477-5955. *Shape of a Girl* by Joan
MacLeod. Performed by Green Thumb
Theatre. *Silent Words* by Chris Dodd.
Jumpin' Jack by Lyle Victor Albert. Until Feb.
10, 8pm; Feb. 3, 2pm. TIX \$16 adult, \$13
student/senior @ TIX on the Square.

A MEDIEVAL FEAST The Celtic Hall,
Golfmore, 10104-32 Ave., 430-3663.
Dinner theatre. An interactive event with
music, theatre, Irish dancers and jugglers.
Every second Friday, 6:30pm doors. Feb. 1
and 15. TIX \$49.95.

PETER PAN John L. Haar Theatre, Grant
MacEwan College, Jasper Place Campus,
497-4470. Based on the play by James M.
Barrie. Feb. 8-16, 8pm; Matinee Sun, Feb.
10 and Feb. 16, 2pm. No show Mon, Feb.
11. TIX \$15 adult @ door; \$12 adult adv.,
\$9 student/senior @ door; \$7 student/sen-
ior adv.

PORN STAR Azimuth Theatre Space,
11315-106 Ave., 420-1757, 454-0583.
Presented by Azimuth Theatre. Comedy by
Chris Craddock. Until Feb. 3, Tue-Sun 8pm.
TIX \$15 adult, \$10 student/senior/equity @
TIX on the Square @ door.

PRESENT LAUGHTER Citadel Shochor
Theatre, 9828-101A Ave., 426-4811. By
Noel Coward. Coward's autobiographical
comedy about celebrity and scandal. Until
Feb. 17. TIX \$33-\$67.

THE RELUCTANT RESURRECTION OF
SHERLOCK HOLMES Varscona Theatre,
10329-83 Ave., 433-3399 ext. 3, 420-
1757. Presented by Shadow Theatre. By
David Belke. When Arthur Conan Doyle is
summoned to a haunted English manor, he
brings with him the ghost of Sherlock
Holmes, who he killed off in a story two
years earlier. Until Feb. 3. Tue-Sat, 8pm; Sat
pay-what-you-can, 2pm; Sun mat, 2pm;
Tue two-for-one. TIX \$15 adult, \$12 sen-
ior/student, \$8 child 12 and under, @ TIX
on the Square.

THE ROVER Timms Centre for the Arts, U
of A, 112 St., 87 Ave., 492-2495. By Aphra
Behn. Presented by Studio Theatre.

Romantic comedy. Set during a carnival in a
17th century Spanish colony. Feb. 7-16,
8pm; Thu, Feb. 14, 12:30pm matinee. No
performance on Sun, Feb. 10. TIX \$8-20.

STAGE STRUCK Walderdale Playhouse,
10322-83 Ave., 433-4659. The Edmonton
Zone Amateur One-Act Festival. FRI, Feb. 8,
7pm; SAT, Feb. 9, 1pm and 7pm. TIX \$7
(single session); \$5 student/senior (single
session); \$18 adult weekend pass, \$12 stu-
dent/senior weekend pass.

THEATRESPORTS New Varscona Theatre,
10329-83 Ave., 448-0695. Every Friday @
11pm Rapid Fire Theatre features teams of
improvisers.

ROCKIE
HOROSCOPE

By ROCKIE GARDINER

♈ ARIES (Mar 20-Apr 19): Every day in every way, you're getting stronger, more active and focussed on what you intend to accomplish next. Now that your Mars ruler is in Aries, a new two-year cycle of expectation, achievement and endurance has begun. Since Saturn turns direct on the 7th, it's safe to assume that financial matters will become less worrisome. Mercury turning direct brings a decision you made around January 1 back to centre stage. Stall for a week. Meanwhile, what about those unpredictable yet warmly lovable friends?

♉ TAURUS (Apr 20-May 20): This is another one of those magical periods when you're unusually attractive and uncommonly erratic—for a placid Bull, that is. You could blame Mercury's impending flip out of retrograde for how frequently you're changing your mind, but the annual merger of your Venus ruler with disruptive Uranus is the real reason. While you're able to draw so much attention to yourself, now would be a good time to get that pretty face on TV or online, perhaps protesting another environmental disaster in the making.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20): So much for marking time! Once Saturn, retrograde in your sign since late September, turns direct (the day before your Mercury ruler does), you'll start to move forward with a plan that has been in the works. Concentrate on organizing, codifying and giving your project a framework you can return to so that the Gemini inclination to "go with the flow" won't take you too far off course. While Saturn can be a drag, it also provides stability, recognition and rewards the rest of society can relate to, like a Dupont or a Nobel.

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22): Your annual flirtation with all things foreign is about to distract you from the straight and narrow path you've been trying to stay on. Whether Mardi Gras and Chinese New Year celebrations will impede your progress depends on where you are psychologically when retrograde Mercury turns direct in your Capricorn house of partners on the 8th. Don't be surprised if you again experience what went down over New Year's, which is when the messenger of the gods first relayed the ideas that captivated you then.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug 22): Divorce before dishonour? Any unpredictable thing might occur when Venus meets erratic, erotic Uranus in your Aquarius marriage house this weekend. Don't be shocked if you're taken totally by surprise. But know that the incredible attraction these planets exert works both ways: you could just as easily fall head over heels as get dumped. Try to wait until your sun ruler joins Uranus on Ash Wednesday before making any drastic moves—or, for that matter, ornate plans for Valentine's Day.

♍ VIRGO (Aug 23-Sept 22): If you followed the game plan suggested for a Mercury retrograde period—i.e., review, rewrite and repair—you could have a polished version of your current project in hand when your ruling planet turns direct on the 8th. But if you need more time, take the rest of the month so you can get past the point at which Mercury stopped its (and your) forward progress. Work, health and service remain the chief areas of interest until romantic Venus gets to Pisces, your partnership sign, in time for Valentine's Day.

♎ LIBRA (Sept 23-Oct 22): One of the givens—a special perk you receive when you're born a Libra—is the transformational power of the energy emanating from your Aquarius house of romance and risk during February. But if you're not having an off-again, on-again affair at the moment and aren't involved heart-and-soul in a group sport, you could use that amazing energy to create a unique work of art. Or a baby. Major life changes often occur in the twinkle of an eye, without a struggle. Not unlike love at first sight.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct 23-Nov 21): You may feel you're under not-especially-unpleasant pressure from various persons hanging around home base, but who needs further disruptions or the constant changing of minds? Until Mercury and Saturn come out of retrograde, communications may continue to be snarled, as will some folks' lips. Why you profit from the situation is beyond my understanding, but there are indications that this unrest will benefit your Pluto co-ruler in your Sag money house, and therefore you too.

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21): Getting up close but not that personal is how Sag and Aquarius usually interact. So while there's an abundance of interesting activity in the sign that rules your comings, goings and e-mails, not a whole lot will make that deep an impression. Feel free to exchange ideas, tech advice and gossip about the group, but save discussions about commitment issues until Saturn in your house of partners has regained firm footing after it flips out of retrograde on the 7th. At least another week.

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20): If you've been holding back because of the retrograde planets, it's time to concentrate again on financial matters, especially buying, selling and gathering info online. Mercury moving forward in Capricorn the day after your Saturn ruler goes direct frees you from constraints you probably weren't aware of. It may take a little while to build back confidence in your choices, but by the end of the month you could be ahead of the game. Back in love? Maybe that as well.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 18): You're still the brightest star in the firmament, so relish the attention while you're getting it. Magnetic Venus will move onto Pisces before St. Valentine comes calling, but the lightning bolt let loose when the goddess of love merges with your Uranus ruler on the 7th will amaze everyone. Another brilliant streak of recognition is set for the 13th as the sun and Uranus meet. Figure out now what you'll initiate at the Aquarius new moon, because your chances of succeeding are awesome.

♓ PISCES (Feb 19-Mar 19): You'll feel more attractive and popular once Venus enters your sign on the 12th but until then, continue to lay back and play the recluse. The weeks before your birthday is the best time to replenish your spirit and review the energy you put out in the world since the last birthday. If there's a retreat you can go on, so much the better; better yet if it's on a tropical island or a snow-capped mountain. Incidentally, like-minded friends may be more important right now than a romantic attachment.

EVENTS WEEKLY

For a FREE listing, fax 426-2889 or e-mail llistings@vue.ab.ca.

Deadline is 3 pm Friday.

Displays/Museums

ALBERTA AVIATION MUSEUM 11410 Kingsway Ave., 451-1175. Open daily 10am-4pm. Telling the story of Edmonton's bush pilots, Alaska Highway construction, defence of Russia and commercial aviation development.

DEVONIAN BOTANIC GARDEN 5 km North of Edmonton on Hwy 60, 987-3054. Open weekends. Authentic Japanese garden, nature trail, 80 acres of connected gardens. TIX \$5.75 adult; \$4.50 senior; child under 4 free. •SAT 2 (10-3pm): Seedy Saturday: Seed swap, lectures. \$2/person, child under 4 free.

JOHN JANZEN NATURE CENTRE Fox Dr., Whitemud Dr., 496-8787, 496-2925. Open weekdays 9am-4pm; weekends/hols 1-4pm (until May 17). •Exhibit room public program: Each Sunday explore a new theme. TIX \$1.25 adult, \$1 youth/senior, \$.75 child, \$3.75 family.

MCKAY AVENUE SCHOOL 10425-99 Ave., 422-1970. Archives and museum located along the river valley on the Heritage Trail. Stroll in the Victorian-era park.

MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM St. Albert Place, 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert. 459-1528. Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm. •CONNECTED VOICES: Celebrating the women of St. Albert. Until Mar. 16. •DISCOVERY ROOM: An interactive educational venue dedicated to children and families. Old-fashioned winter fun. Hear stories of St. Albert women. Suggested donation \$2.

MUTTART CONSERVATORY 9626-96A St., 496-8755. Open Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm; Sat-Sun, 11am-6pm. •THE HEART OF EDMONTON: Until Feb. 24.

ODYSSIUM 11211-142 St., 452-9100. Open Sun-Thu, hols 10am-5pm; Fri-Sat 10am-9pm. Edmonton's space and science centre. •TransCanada PipeLines Gallery: Space Place: Hands-on exhibits.

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave., 453-9100, 453-9131. www.pma.edmonton.ab.ca, Open daily 9am-5pm. •SYNCRUDE CANADA ABO-RIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit. •Foyer, 428-2064. Thu 31 (6pm): Indigenous Education initiative presented by Athabasca University. Screening of *Yolngu Boy* (Australian film). Entertainment by Asani (a ccapella quartet), the White

Buffalo Drummers and Dancers. Tix \$25 adult, \$10 student. Proceeds go to AU's Indigenous Education Scholarship Fund. •TREASURES OF THE EARTH: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit. •THE HABITAT GALLERY: Glimpse the lakes, forests, prairies and animals of Alberta. Permanent exhibit. •THE NATURAL HISTORY GALLERY: •BUG ROOM: Live invertebrate display. Permanent. •THE BIRD GALLERY: Mounted birds. Permanent. •SIXTIES: Elliot Landy's *Spirit of a Generation* Dylan, The Band and Woodstock. Until Apr. 1. •Alice's Restaurant (The Museum Café), 488-7333. Open Mon-Thu 9am-8pm; Fri 9am-midnight (coffeehouse evenings); Sat-Sun 10am-4pm. Until Mar. 22. FRI 1: Karen Gwillim. FRI 8: Brett Leibham (rock guitar). •TIX Weekend \$12 adult; \$10 senior; \$6 youth (7-17 yrs.); free child 6 and under; \$30 family. TIX (until Apr. 1) weekdays (25% off) \$9 adult; \$7.50 senior; \$4.50 youth (7-17 yrs.); free child 6 and under; \$22.50 family. •492-2973. FRI 8 (7pm): The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, and the National Film Board of Canada present *My Mother's Village* (documentary film). Followed by a discussion and reception with the award-winning filmmaker John Paskievich. TIX \$7 adult, \$5 student/child, child under 12 free @ door. Adv. tix @ the Ukrainian Book Store, (10215-97 St.). •SAT 9 (5:30pm door): Ducks Unlimited at the Provincial Museum. Speaker Dr. Morley Barrett. TIX \$125 ea.

RUTHERFORD HOUSE 11153 Saskatchewan Dr., U of A Campus, 427-3995. Open Tue-Sun, 12 noon-5pm. Costumed interpreters recreate daily household activities.

Kids stuff

CALDER LIBRARY 12522-132 Ave., 414-5656. •Every THU (10:30am and 1:30pm); TUE (7pm): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Pre-register. Until May 30. SAT 2 (2pm): Valentine Hearts, 3-12 yrs.

CAPILANO LIBRARY 201 Capilano Mall, 98 Ave., 50 St., 496-1802. •Every THU (10:15 am): Little tales for little people, 3-5 yrs. Drop-in. Until Feb. 21. SAT 9 (2pm): Cupid's caper, 5-8 yrs. Pre-register.

EDMONTON ASSOCIATION FOR BRIGHT CHILDREN (EABC) •Alberta School for the Deaf, Sun Room, 6240-113 St., 436-0533, 433-9371. SAT 2 (10am-noon): Super Saturday session for members in Grades 1-6. Band instrument petting zoo. Pre-register. Free for members (EABC memberships available).

EDMONTON CHINESE COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE 429-3111. Asian-Canadian Youth Team, 11-16 yrs. Meets for two Sat. activities ea. month. Recreational,

volunteer, fundraising opportunities. Workshops and discussions on various youth topics. Various locations. Until March.

HIGHLANDS LIBRARY 6710-118 Ave., 496-1806. •Every THU (10:15am): Totally twos. Until Feb. 21. •Every TUE (10:15am and 2pm): Pre-school fun time, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 19. Pre-register. SAT 9 (2pm): Calling all cupids, 4-10 yrs. pre-register.

IDYLWYLDE LIBRARY 8310-88 Ave., 496-1808. •Every TUE (10:15am): Time for twos. Until Feb. 5. Pre-register. •Every WED (10:15am): Storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 6. Pre-register.

JASPER PLACE LIBRARY 9010-156 St., 496-1810. •Every WED (2pm): Pre-school storytime, 4-5 yrs. Until Feb. 20. Pre-register. •Every WED (1pm): Pre-school storytime, 3 yrs. Until Feb. 20. Pre-register. •Every TUE (10:15am): Baby laptime, 1-2 yrs. Until Feb. 19. Pre-register. •Every THU (10:15am): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 21. Pre-register. SAT 9 (2pm): Very Valentine, 9-12 yrs. Pre-register.

LESSARD LIBRARY Lessard Shopping Centre, 6104-172 St., 496-1871. •Every TUE/WED (10am): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Apr. 24. •Every THU (7pm): Family storytime, 3+ yrs. Until Apr. 25.

LONDONDERRY LIBRARY Londonderry Mall, 137 Ave., 66 St., 496-1814. •Every TUE (10:15-10:45am): Now that I'm three storytime. Until Feb. 12. Pre-register. •Every TUE (2-2:30pm): Pre-school storytime, 4-5 yrs. Until Apr. 30. Drop-in. •Every WED (10:30-10:50am): Time for twos. Until Feb. 13. Pre-register. •Every MON (10:30-10:50am): Baby laptime. Crawling, birth-23 months. SAT 9 (10am-11am): Junior Stamp Club: The glue that binds us.

MILL WOODS LIBRARY Mill Woods Town Centre, 2331-66 St., 496-1818. •Every TUE (10:15-10:45am); WED (2:15-2:45pm): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 13. Pre-register. SAT 2 (2pm): Silly Saturday: Elephants everywhere. SAT 9 (2pm): Crafty cupids, 5-12 yrs.

PENNY MCKEE LIBRARY Abbottsfield Mall, 3210-118 Ave., 496-7839. •Every TUE (10:30am): Time for twos. Until Feb. 19. Drop-in. •Every WED (2pm): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 20. Drop-in.

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert, 460-4310. THU 31: (1:30-2:30pm): Parent and Pre-schooler Program: Dennis Lee. SAT 2 (1-4pm): Art-Ventures for Kids: Poetic posters. \$2/child. SAT 9 (1-4pm): Art-Ventures for Kids: Lovely little magnets. \$2/child.

RIVERBEND LIBRARY 460 Riverbend Sq., Rabbit Hill Rd., Terwilliger Dr., 944-5311. •Drop-in storytime, 3-5 yrs. •Every THU (10:30am): Fun for ones, 12-24 months. Until Feb. 21. Pre-register. •Every FRI (10:30am): Totally twos. Until Feb. 22. Pre-register. SAT 9 (2pm): Silly Saturday, 5+ yrs. Pre-register.

SOUTHGATE LIBRARY Southgate Shopping Centre, 496-1822. •Every WED (2:15-2:45pm): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Apr. 24. Drop-in. •Every TUE (10:15-10:45am): Family storytime. Until Apr. 23. Drop-in. •Every WED (10:15-10:45am): Time for twos. Pre-register. SAT 9 (10-11am): Junior Stamp Club: The glue that binds us. SAT 9 (11am and 2pm): A Valentine for you.

SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY 11555-95 St., 496-7099. •Every TUE (1:30pm): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 19. Pre-register. SAT 9 (2pm): Gung hay fat choy, 5-12 yrs. Pre-register.

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq., 496-7000. •Every SUN (2pm): Children's storytime, 3+ yrs. Until Apr. 28. •Every SAT (10am): Research central, 9-12 yrs. Pre-register. Until Apr. 27.

STRATHCONA LIBRARY 8331-104 St., 496-1828. •Every TUE (10:30am): Storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 12. Pre-register. •Every FRI (10:30am): Time for twos. Until Feb. 15. Pre-register.

WOODCROFT LIBRARY 13420-114 Ave., 496-1830. •Every WED (7pm): Bedtime tales. Until Feb. 27. •Every MON (2:30pm); WED (10:30am): Pre-school storytime, 3-5 yrs. Until Feb. 25. Pre-register. •Every TUE (10:15am): Baby laptime, 1-2 yrs. Pre-register. Until Feb. 26. •Every MON (10:340am): I am three. Until Feb. 25.

•Every TUE (11:15am); THU (10:30am): Time for twos. Until Feb. 28. Pre-register. SAT 9 (2:30pm): Heart of the dragon.

Lectures/Meetings

CALDER LIBRARY 12522-132 Avenue, 414-5656. •Every TUE (6:30pm): Living with loss. Pre-register. Until Feb. 26.

CENTRE FOR WELLNESS IN MOTION N. Edmonton, 459-3908. Every 2nd, 4th WED (6:30-8:30pm): What is foot reflexology? Come for an introductory foot reflexology session during the drop-in clinic.

DANCE EXPRESSIONZ Capital Tower Building, 206, 10609-101 St., 426-4766. Relieve daily stress through dance.

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE 9125-50 Street, 465-8331. FRI 8: King's View.

LUPUS SOCIETY OF ALBERTA 1-888-242-9182. The Edmonton chapter of the Lupus Society has closed. For assistance contact the provincial office.

THE MARS HILL CENTRE 402-10314-82 Avenue, 435-0202. FRI 1 (5:30-7pm): Boundaries: Rebuild the boundaries in your life. 16 weeks. \$125. Pre-register.

MILL WOODS LIBRARY Mill Woods Town Centre, 2331-66 St., 496-1818. •Every FRI (1-4:30pm): Bridge players. Until April 26. Drop-in.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS SOCIETY 471-3034. Saturday Tai Chi. Pre-register.

NEWMAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE 15611 St. Albert Trail, 447-2993, ext. 258. MON 4-TUE 5: Winter open house. SAT 9 (7pm): Leap in Lent: Square dancing for beginners.

N'ORATORS TOASTMASTERS CLUB 474-6001. •Every THU evening overcome your fears of public speaking.

OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED NETWORKING GROUP Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, 600, 10123-99 Street, (west door), 426-4620. FRI 1 (6:45-8:30am): Speaker Ernest C. Bastide presents *Mediation for Small Business*. \$2. FRI 8 (6:45-8:30am): Speaker Wendy Wheeler presents *Think Looks Don't Matter? Think Again*. \$2. Everyone welcome

PUBLIC MEETING Daly Grove Elementary School, 1888-37 Street, 496-6218. WED 6 (7pm): Proposed amendment to the Meadows Area Structure Plan and the Silver Berry Neighbourhood Structure Plan.

QUEEN ALEXANDRA HALL 10425 University Avenue. •988-2713. SUN 10 (5:30-7pm): Vegetarians of Alberta monthly potluck. TIX \$2 member, \$3 non-member. •471-5295. SAT 9 (1pm door): Rock With the Animals. TIX \$3 adv., \$5 @ door.

SHAW CONFERENCE CENTRE 9797 Jasper Avenue, 451-8000. SAT 9 (7pm): Mr. Praimath (survivor of the collapse of World Trade Centre). Question and answer period. TIX \$5 ea, \$8 @ door. Adv. tickets @ TicketMaster, Blessings Christian Marketplace, Central Baptist Church. Proceeds to Samaritan's Purse - Project Afghanistan Relief.

STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY Edmonton Rm., 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square, 988-2713. WED 6 (6:30pm): *Building with Straw* and *How to Build your Elegant Home from Straw Bales* (video presentation). Free.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA •COALITION AGAINST WAR AND RACISM Humanities Centre, Rm. 1-7, U of A Campus. •Every THU (4:30-5:30pm): Meeting. Everyone welcome. •INTERNATIONAL WEEK 2002 492-2692. •Myer Horowitz Theatre. THU 31 (7pm): *Protecting the Planet: Options for Action*. Most events are free. FRI 1 (7:30pm): *Rhythms of the Planet* concert. TIX Adv. \$8 student; \$10 non-student. •SPANISH LANGUAGE CAFÉ Parkallen Pizza, Upstairs 8424-109 St., 492-4221. •Every THU (7-8:30pm): Beginner-adv. students of Spanish, opportunity to practice conversational skills. •UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA MUSEUMS, Rm. 2-20, Fine Arts Building. SUN 10 (1-3pm): De-constructing Barbie.

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION Bonnie Doon Recycle, W Bonnie Doon Mall, 85 St., 85 Avenue. •478-5622. SAT 2 (10am): Free guided cross country ski (approx. 10 km). Bring lunch and beverage.

age. •455-7862. SUN 10 (10am): Free guided cross country ski (approx. 10 km). Miquelon Park. Bring lunch and beverage.

Literary events

AUDREY'S BOOKS Jasper Ave., 107 St. THU 7 (7:30pm): Robert Kroetsch reading from *The Hornbooks of Rita K.*

NEWMAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE 15611 St. Albert Tr., 447-2993, ext. 258. FRI 8 (4pm): Book launch of *Contemplation and Incarnation: The Theology of Marie-Dominique Chenu* by Dr. Christophe Potworowski.

live comedy

FARGO'S ON WHYTE 10307-82 Avenue, 433-4526. •Every SUN: Fargos Laugh-a-Lot Comedy. SUN 3: Host Tim Koslo *The Return of Marty McLean*.

J.J.'S PUB 13160-118 Ave., 451-9180. WED 30: Showcase night. Live comedy by the Comedy Support Troupe.

THE POLISH HALL 10960-104 St. FRI 8: Comedy show and dance party. Featuring Rawye, Ronnie Edwards, Kenny Robinson (comedians); DJ Whoo Kid and Genie (female soul band).

SIDETRACK CAFÉ 10333-112 St., 421-1326. •Every THU (7:30-9:30pm): What Happens Next? comedy improv show, hosted by Graham Neil. Through winter and spring. TIX \$3.

special events

CANADIAN BURN FOUNDATION AND THE FIREFIGHTERS BURN TREATMENT SOCIETY Sawmill Banquet Centre, 3840-76 Ave., 448-9025. SAT 9: Evening of enchantment: Dinner, dance and silent auction. TIX \$40 ea.

THE EVERYTHING TO DO WITH SEX SHOW Northlands Park, Sportex Building. Until Feb. 3.

THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE OF EDMONTON (GLCC) 101-10612-124 St., 488-3234. •Open Mon-Fri 1:30-5:30pm; 7-10pm. For information, and/or support, during the holiday season and year-round, call or drop-in. Providing information and support about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues.

Grant MacEwan College 10700-104 Ave., 412-9582. SAT 9 (8:30am-5pm): Kindness To Colleagues Conference.

HOLISTIC AND PSYCHIC FAIR Norwood Legion, 112 Ave., 82 St. FRI 1 (2-9pm); SAT 2 (noon-9pm); SUN 3 (noon-7pm). \$5, child free.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE SHOW Northlands Park, 7300-116 Ave. FRI 8 (4-9pm), SAT 9 (10am-7pm), SUN 10 (10am-5pm): Outdoor sports and travel marketplace. TIX \$8 adult, \$6 youth (10-18 yrs).

workshops

DREAMS: VOICES OF THE SOUL 414 Boardwalk, 10310-102 Ave., 435-7170. 9-SUN 10 (9:30am-4:30pm): Learn the language of dreams. Presented by Deborah Barrett-Jardine, PhD. Pre-register.

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH 488-0564. •Coming out workshop. Starts Feb. 13 (6 wks). •Positively gay workshop. Starts Feb. 5 (5 wks).

GRANT MACEWAN COLLEGE •Jasper Place Campus, 10045-156 St., 497-4336. •Web Design for the Beginner. Feb. 5-21. •Web Site Design and Development Level II. Feb. 2-3. •QuarkXPress Level I. Feb. 9-10. •Introduction to Strata 3D. Feb. 16-17. •City Centre Campus, 497-4301. •Camera Basics. Starts Feb. 12. •GoLive. Feb. 9-10.

HEALTH CARE STUDY CIRCLE 988-3802. •Every SAT (4-6pm): Hosted by Rod Olstad. Until Mar. 9.

HIGHLANDS LIBRARY 6710-118 Ave., 496-1806. WED 6 (6:30pm): Explore the world of the EPL Website. Pre-register.

JASPER PLACE LIBRARY 9010-156 St., 496-1810. SAT 2 (2-3pm): Introduction to cake decorating. Pre-register.

SPRUCEWOOD LIBRARY 11555-95 St., 496-7099. MON 4 (6:30pm): Meditation.

SUSSEX GALLERIES 290 Saddleback Rd., 988-2266. Adults and kids art classes, professional instruction, with small class sizes.

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